



TENNYSON

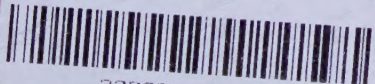
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Bessie Anderson.

Bessie—

A Merry Christmas &  
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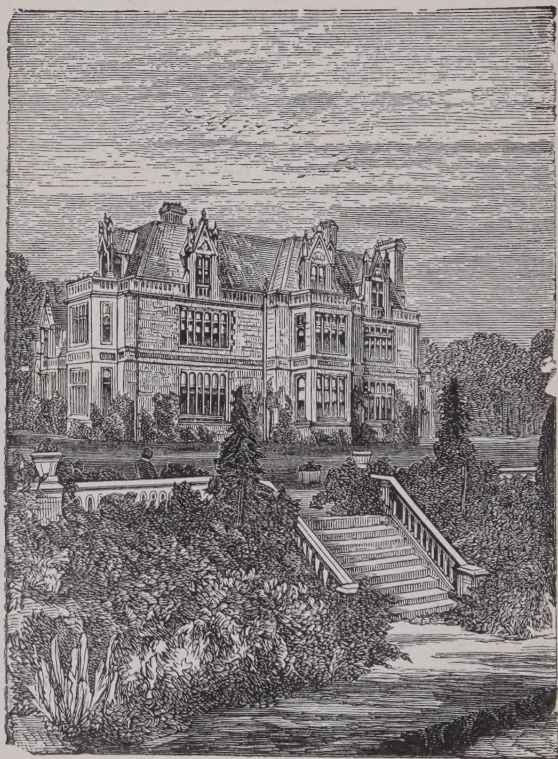
Friend & Schoolmate—

Jennie A. Hampden

St Paul.







ALDWORTH.

MR. TENNYSON'S RESIDENCE.

THE  
COMPLETE WORKS  
— OF —  
ALFRED TENNYSON,

(POET LAUREATE.)

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*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.*

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HURST & CO., PUBLISHERS.

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## TO THE QUEEN.

---

REVERED, beloved — O you that hold  
A nobler office upon earth  
Than arms, or power of brain, or birth  
Could give the warrior kings of old,

Victoria, — since your Royal grace  
To one of less desert allows  
This laurel greener from the brows  
Of him that utter'd nothing base;

And should your greatness, and the care  
That yokes with empire, yield you time  
To make demand of modern rhyme  
If aught of ancient worth be there;

Then — while a sweeter music wakes,  
And thro' wild March the throstle calls,  
Where all about your palace-walls  
The sun-lit almond-blossom shakes —

Take, Madam, this poor book of song;  
For tho' the faults were thick as dust  
In vacant chambers, I could trust  
Your kindness. May you rule us long,

TO THE QUEEN.

And leave us rulers of your blood  
 As noble till the latest day !  
 May children of our children say,  
 'She wrought her people lasting good,

'Her court was pure ; her life serene ;  
 God gave her peace ; her land reposed ;  
 A thousand claims to reverence closed  
 In her as Mother, Wife and Queen ;

'And statesmen at her council met  
 Who knew the seasons when to take  
 Occasion by the hand, and make  
 The bounds of freedom wider yet

'By shaping some august decree,  
 Which kept her throne unshaken still,  
 Broad-based upon her people's will ;  
 And compass'd by the inviolate sea.'



# POEMS.

## CLARIBEL.

### A MELODY.

#### I.

WHERE Claribel low-lieth  
The breezes pause and die,  
Letting the rose-leaves fall:  
But the solemn oak-tree sigheth,  
Thick-leaved, ambrosial,  
With an ancient melody  
Of an inward agony,  
Where Claribel low-lieth.

#### II.

At eve the beetle boometh  
Athwart the thicket lone:  
At noon the wild bee hummeth  
About the moss'd headstone:  
At midnight the moon cometh,  
And looketh down alone.  
Her song the lintwhite swelleth,  
The clear-voiced mayis dwelleth,  
The callow throistle hspeth,  
The slumbrous wave outwelleth,  
The babbling runnel crispeth,  
The hollow grot replieth  
Where Claribel low-lieth.

## LILIAN.

#### I.

AIRY, fairy Lilian,  
Flitting, fairy Lilian,  
When I ask her if she love me,  
Claps her tiny hands above me,  
Laughing all she can;  
She'll not tell me if she love me,  
Cruel little Lilian.

#### II.

When my passion seeks  
Pleasance in love-sighs,  
She, looking thro' and thro' me  
Thoroughly to undo me,  
Smiling, never speaks:  
So innocent-arch, so cunning-simple,  
From beneath her gather'd wimple  
Glancing with black-beaded eyes,  
Till the lightning laughers dimple  
The baby-roses in her cheeks;  
Then away she flies.

#### III.

Prythee weep, May Lilian!  
Gayety without eclipse  
Wearieth me, May Lilian:  
Thro' my very heart it thrilleth  
When from crimson-threaded lips  
Silver-treble laughter trilleth:  
Prythee weep, May Lilian.

#### IV.

Praying all I can,  
If prayers will not hush thee,  
Airy Lilian,  
Like a rose-leaf I will crush thee,  
Fairy Lilian.

## ISABEL.

#### I.

EYES not down-dropt nor over bright,  
but fed  
With the clear-pointed flame of  
chastity,  
Clear, without heat, undying,  
tended by  
Pure vestal thoughts in the  
translucent fane  
Of her still spirit; locks not wide-  
dispread,  
Madonna-wise on either side her  
head;  
Sweet lips whereon perpetually  
did reign  
The summer calm of golden charity,  
Were fixed shadows of thy fixed mood,  
Revered Isabel, the crown and  
head,  
The stately flower of female fortitude,  
Of perfect wifehood and pure low-  
lihead.

#### II.

The intuitive decision of a bright  
And thorough-edged intellect to part  
Error from crime; a prudence to  
withhold;  
The laws of marriage character'd  
in gold  
Upon the blanched tablets of her  
heart;  
A love still burning upward, giving  
light  
To read those laws; an accent very  
low  
In blandishment, but a most silver  
flow  
Of subtle-paced counsel in dis-  
tress,  
Right to the heart and brain, tho'  
undescried,  
Winning its way with extreme  
gentleness  
Thro' all the outworks of suspicious  
pride;  
A courage to endure and to obey;  
A hate of gossip parlanee, and of  
sway,

Crown'd Isabel, thro' all her placid  
life,  
The queen of marriage, a most perfect wife.

## III.

The mellow'd reflex of a winter moon ;  
A clear stream flowing with a muddy  
one,

Till in its onward current it absorbs  
With swifter movement and in  
purer light

The vexed eddies of its wayward  
brother :

A leaning and upbearing parasite,  
Clothing the stem, which else had  
fallen quite,

With cluster'd flower-bells and ambrosial orbs

Of rich fruit-bunches leaning on  
each other—

Shadow forth thee:—the world  
hath not another

(Tho' all her fairest forms are types of  
thee,

And thou of God in thy great charity)  
Of such a finish'd chasten'd purity.

## MARIANA.

"Mariana in the moated grange."  
*Measure for Measure.*

WITH blackest moss the flower-plots  
Were thickly crusted, one and all :  
The rusted nails fell from the knots  
That held the pear to the gable-wall.  
The broken sheds look'd sad and  
strange :

Unlifted was the clinking latch ;  
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch  
Upon the lonely moated grange.

She only said, "My life is dreary,  
He cometh not," she said ;

She said, "I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead !"

Her tears fell with the dews at even ;  
Her tears fell ere the dews were  
dried ;

She could not look on the sweet heaven,  
Either at morn or eventide.

After the fitting of the bats,  
When thickest dark did trance the  
sky,

She drew her casement-curtain by,  
And glanced athwart the glooming  
flats.

She only said, "The night is  
dreary,

He cometh not," she said ;

She said, "I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead."

Upon the middle of the night,  
Waking she heard the night-fowl  
crow :

The cock sung out an hour ere light :  
From the dark fen the oxen's low  
Came to her : without hope of change,  
In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,

Till cold winds woke the grey-eyed  
morn

About the lonely moated grange.

She only said, "The day is dreary,  
He cometh not," she said ;

She said, "I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead !"

About a stone-cast from the wall

A sluice with blackened waters  
slept,

And o'er it many, round and small,  
The cluster'd marish-mosses crept.

Hard by a poplar shook alway,

All silver-green with gnarled bark :  
For leagues no other tree did mark  
The level waste, the rounding gray.

She only said, "My life is dreary,  
He cometh not," she said ;

She said, "I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead !"

And ever when the moon was low,

And the shrill winds were up and away,  
In the white curtain, to and fro,

She saw the gusty shadow sway.

But when the moon was very low,  
And wild winds bound within their  
cell,

The shadow of the poplar fell

Upon her bed, across her brow.

She only said, "The night is dreary,  
He cometh not," she said ;

She said, "I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead !"

All day within the dreamy house,

The doors upon their hinges creak'd ;  
The blue fly sung in the pane ; the  
mouse

Behind the mouldering wainscot  
shriek'd,

Or from the crevice peer'd about.

Old faces glimmer'd thro' the doors,  
Old footsteps trod the upper floors,

Old voices called her from without.

She only said, "My life is dreary,  
He cometh not," she said ;

She said, "I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead !"

The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,  
The slow clock ticking, and the  
sound

Which to the wooing wind aloof

The poplar made, did all confound

Her sense ; but most she loathed the  
hour

When the thick-moted sunbeam lay  
Athwart the chambers, and the day

Wassloping toward his western bower.

Then, said she, "I am very dreary,  
He will not come," she said ;

She wept, "I am aweary, aweary,  
O God, that I were dead !"

## TO —.

## I.

CLEAR-HEADED friend, whose joyful  
scorn,

Edged with sharp laughter, cuts  
atwain

The knots that tangle human creeds,  
The wounding cords that bind and strain

The heart until it bleeds,  
Ray-fringed eyelids of the morn  
Roof not a glance so keen as thine :  
If aught of prophecy be mine,  
Thou wilt not live in vain.

## II.

Low-cowering shall the Sophist sit ;  
Falsehood shall bare her plaited brow :

Fair-fronted Truth shall droop not  
now

With shrilling shafts of subtle wit.  
Nor martyr-flames, nor trenchant swords

Can do away that ancient lie ;  
A gentler death shall Falsehood die,  
Shot thro' and thro' with cunning words.

## III.

Weak Truth a-leaning on her crutch,  
Wan, wasted Truth in her utmost need,

Thy kingly intellect shall feed,  
Until she be an athlete bold,  
And weary with a finger's touch

Those writhed limbs of lightning speed ;  
Like that strange angel which of old,

Until the breaking of the light,  
Wrestled with wandering Israel,  
Past Yabbok brook the livelong night,

And heaven's mazed signs stood still  
In the dim tract of Penuel.

## MADELINE

## I.

THOU art not steep'd in golden languors,

No tranced summer calm is thine,  
Ever varying Madeline.

Thro' light and shadow thou dost range,

Sudden glances, sweet and strange,  
Delicious spites and darling angers,  
And airy forms of fitting change.

## II.

Smiling, frowning, evermore,  
Thou art perfect in love-lore.

Revealings deep and clear are thine  
Of wealthy smiles : but who may know  
Whether smile or frown be fleetier ?  
Whether smile or frown be sweeter,  
Who may know ?

Frowns perfect-sweet along the brow  
Light-glooming over eyes divine,  
Like little clouds sun-fringed, are  
thine,

Ever varying Madeline.

Thy smile and frown are not aloof  
From one another,  
Each to each is dearest brother ;  
Hues of the silken sheeny woof  
Momentally shot into each other.

All the mystery is thine ;  
Smiling, frowning, evermore,  
Thou art perfect in love-lore,  
Ever varying Madeline.

## III.

A subtle, sudden-flame,  
By veering passion fann'd,  
About thee breaks and dances ;

When I would kiss thy hand,  
The flush of anger'd shame

O'erflows thy calmer glances,  
And o'er black brows drops down  
A sudden-curved frown :

But when I turn away,  
Thou, willing me to stay,

Wooest not, nor vainly wranglest ;  
But, locking fixedly the while,  
All my bounding heart entanglest

In a golden-netted smile ;  
Then in madness and in bliss,  
If my lips should dare to kiss

Thy taper fingers amorously,  
Again thou blushest angrily ;

And o'er black brows drops down  
A sudden-curved frown.

## SONG.—THE OWL.

## I.

WHEN cats run home and light is come,  
And dew is cold upon the ground,  
And the far-off stream is dumb,  
And the whirring sail goes round ;  
And the whirring sail goes round ;  
Alone and warming his five wits,  
The white owl in the belfry sits.

## II

When merry milkmaids click the latch,  
And rarely smells the new-mown  
hay,

And the cock hath sung beneath the  
thatch

Twice or thrice his roundelay,  
Twice or thrice his roundelay ;  
Alone and warming his five wits,  
The white owl in the belfry sits.

## SECOND SONG.

## TO THE SAME.

## I.

THY tuwhits are lull'd, I wot,  
Thy tuwhoos of yesternight,  
Which upon the dark afloat,  
So took echo with delight,  
So took echo with delight,  
That her voice untuneful grown  
Wears all day a fainter tone.

## II.

I would mock thy chant anew ;  
But I cannot mimic it ;  
Not a whit of thy tuwhoo,  
Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,  
Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,  
With a lengthen'd loud halloo,  
Tuwhoo, tuwhit, tuwhit, to  
whoo-o-o.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE  
ARABIAN NIGHTS.

WHEN the breeze of a joyful dawn  
blew free

In the silken sail of infancy,  
The tide of time flow'd back with me,  
The forward-flowing tide of time;  
And many a sheeny summer-morn,  
Adown the Tigris I was borne,  
By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold,  
High-walled gardens green and old;  
True Mussulman was I and sworn,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Night my shallop, rustling thro'  
The low and bloomed foliage, drove  
The fragrant, glistening deeps, and  
clove

The citron-shadows in the blue:  
By garden porches on the brim,  
The costly doors flung open wide,  
Gold glittering thro' lamplight dim,  
And broider'd sofas on each side:  
In sooth it was a goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Often, where clear-stemm'd platans  
guard

The outlet, did I turn away  
The boat-head down a broad canal  
From the main river sluiced, where all  
The sloping of the moon-lit sward  
Was damask-work, and deep inlay  
Of braided blooms unnown, which  
crept

Adown to where the water slept,  
A goodly place, a goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

A motion from the river won  
Ridged the smooth level, bearing on  
My shallop thro' the star-strown calm,  
Until another night in night  
I enter'd, from the clearer light,  
Imbower'd vaults of pillar'd palm,  
Imprisoning sweets, which, as they  
clomb

Heavenward, were stay'd beneath the  
dome  
Of hollow boughs.—A goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Still onward; and the clear canal  
Is rounded to as clear a lake.  
From the green rivage many a fall  
Of diamond rillels musical,  
Thro' little crystal arches low  
Down from the central fountain's flow  
Fall'n silver-chiming, seem'd to shake  
The sparkling fints beneath the prow.  
A goodly place, a goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Above thro' many a bowery turn  
A walk with vary-color'd shells

Wander'd engrain'd. On either side  
All round about the fragrant marge  
From fluted vase, and brazen urn  
In order, eastern flowers large,  
Some dropping low their crimson bells  
Half-closed, and others studded wide  
With disks and tiars, fcd the time  
With odor in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Far off, and where the lemon grove  
In closest coverture upsprung,  
The living airs of middle night  
Died round the bulbul as he sung;  
Not he: but something which pos-  
sess'd

The darkness of the world, delight,  
Life, anguish, death, immortal love,  
Ceasing not, mingled, unrepress'd,  
Apart from place, withholding time.  
But flattering the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Black the garden-bowers and grots  
Slumber'd: the solemn palms were  
ranged

Above, unwoo'd of summer wind:  
A sudden splendor from behind  
Flush'd all the leaves with rich gold-  
green,

And, flowing rapidly between  
Their interspaces, counterchanged  
The level lake with diamond-plots  
Of dark and bright. A lovely time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Dark-blue the deep sphere overhead,  
Distinct with vivid stars inlaid,  
Grew darker from that under-flame:  
So, leaping lightly from the boat,  
With silver anchor left afloat,  
In marvel whence that glory came  
Upon me, as in sleep I sank  
In cool soft turf upon the bank,  
Entranced with that place and time,  
So worthy of the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Thence thro' the garden I was drawn—  
A realm of pleasance, many a mound,  
And many a shadow-chequer'd lawn  
Full of the city's stilly sound,  
And deep myrrh-thickets blowing  
round

The stately cedar, tamarisks,  
Thick rosaries of scented thorn,  
Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks  
Graven with emblems of the time,  
In honor of the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

With dazed vision unawares  
From the long alley's latticed shade  
Emerged, I came upon the great  
Pavilion of the Caliph.  
Right to the carven cedarn doors,  
Flung inward over spangled floors,  
Broad-based flights of marble stairs  
Ran up with golden balustrade,  
After the fashion of the time,  
And humor of the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

## ODE TO MEMORY.

The fourscore windows all alight  
As with the quintessence of flame,  
A million tapers flaring bright  
From twisted silvers look'd to shame  
The hollow-vaulted dark, and stream'd  
Upon the mooned domes aloof  
In inmost Bagdat, till there seem'd  
Hundreds of crescents on the roof  
Of night new-risen, that marvellous  
time

To celebrate the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Then stole I up, and trancedly  
Gazed on the Persian girl alone,  
Serene with argent-lidded eyes  
Amorous, and lashes like to rays  
Of darkness, and a brow of pearl  
Tressed with redolent ebony,  
In many a dark delicious curl,  
Flowing beneath her rose-hued zone;  
The sweetest lady of the time,  
Well worthy of the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Six columns, three on either side,  
Pure silver, underpropt a rich  
Throne of the massive ore, from which  
Down-droop'd, in many a floating fold,  
Engarlanded and diaper'd  
With inwrought flowers, a cloth of  
gold.

Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stirr'd  
With merriment of kingly pride,  
Sole star of all that place and time,  
I saw him—in his golden prime,  
THE GOOD HAROUN ALRASCHID !

### ODE TO MEMORY.

#### I.

THOU who stealest fire,  
From the fountains of the past,  
To glorify the present ; O, haste,  
Visit my low desire !  
Strengthen me, enlighten me !  
I faint in this obscurity,  
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

#### II.

Come not as thou camest of late,  
Flinging the gloom of yesternight  
On the white day ; but robed in soft-  
en'd light

Of orient state.  
Whilome thou camest with the morn-  
ing mist,  
Even as a maid, whose stately brow  
The dew-impearled winds of dawn have  
kiss'd,

When she, as thou,  
Stays on her floating locks the lovely  
freight  
Of overflowing blooms, and earliest  
shoots  
Of orient green, giving safe pledge of  
fruits,  
Which in wintertide shall star  
The black earth with brilliance rare.

#### III.

Whilome thou camest with the morn-  
ing mist,  
And with the evening cloud,  
Showering thy gleaned wealth into my  
open breast  
(Those peerless flowers which in the  
rudest wind

Never grow sere,  
When rooted in the garden of the  
mind,  
Because they are the earliest of the  
year).

Nor was the night thy shroud.  
In sweet dreams softer than unbroken  
rest  
Thou leddest by the hand thine infant  
Hope.

The eddying of her garments caught  
from thee  
The light of thy great presence ; and  
the cope

Of the half-attain'd futurity,  
Tho' deep not fathomless,  
Was cloven with the million stars  
which tremble  
O'er the deep mind of dauntless in-  
fancy.

Small thought was there of life's dis-  
tress ;

For sure she deem'd no mist of earth  
could dull

Those spirit-thrilling eyes so keen and  
beautiful :

Sure she was nigher to heaven's  
spheres,

Listening the lordly music flowing  
from

The illimitable years.  
O strengthen me, enlighten me !  
I faint in this obscurity,  
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

#### IV.

Come forth, I charge thee, arise,  
Thou of the many tongues, the myriad  
eyes !

Thou comest not with shows of flaunt-  
ing vines

Unto mine inner eye,  
Divinest Memory !

Thou wert not nursed by the water-  
fall

Which ever sounds and shines

A pillar of white light upon the wall  
Of purple cliffs, aloof descried :

Come from the woods that belt the  
gray hillside,

The seven elms, the poplars four  
That stand beside my father's door,  
And chiefly from the brook that loves  
To purl o'er matted cress and ribbed  
sand,

Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,  
Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,

In every elbow and turn,  
The filter'd tribute of the rough wood-  
land.

O ! hither lead thy feet !

## ADELINE.

Pour round mine ears the livelong  
bleat  
Of the thick-fleeced sheep from wat-  
tled folds,  
Upon the ridged wolds,  
When the first matin-song hath wak-  
en'd loud  
Over the dark dewy earth forlorn,  
What time the amber morn  
Forth gushes from beneath a low-hung  
cloud.

## V.

Large dowries doth the raptured eye  
To the young spirit present  
When first she is wed ;  
And like a bride of old  
In triumph led,  
With music and sweet showers  
Of festal flowers,  
Unto the dwelling she must sway.  
Well hast thou done, great artist Mem-  
ory,  
In setting round thy first experiment  
With royal frame-work of wrought  
gold ;  
Needs must thou dearly love thy first  
essay,  
And foremost in thy various gallery  
Place it, where sweetest sunlight  
falls  
Upon the storied walls ;  
For the discovery  
And newness of thine art so pleased  
thee,  
That all which thou hast drawn of  
fairest  
Or boldest since, but lightly weighs  
With thee unto the love thou bearest  
The first-born of thy genius. Artist-  
like,  
Ever retiring thou dost gaze  
On the prime labor of thine early  
days :  
No matter what the sketch might be ;  
Whether the high field on the bush-  
less Pike,  
Or even a sand-built ridge  
Of heaped hills that mound the sea,  
Overblown with murmurs harsh,  
Or even a lowly cottage whence we see  
Stretch'd wide and wild the waste  
enormous marsh,  
Where from the frequent bridge,  
Like emblems of infinity,  
The trenched waters run from sky to  
sky ;  
Or a garden bower'd close  
With plaited alleys of the trailing rose,  
Long alleys falling down to twilight  
grotts,  
Or opening upon level plots  
Of crowned lilies, standing near  
Purple-spiked lavender :  
Whither in after life retired  
From brawling storms,  
From weary fancy,  
With youthful winds re-inspired,  
We may hold converse with all forms  
Of the many-sided mind,

And those whom passion hath not  
blinded,  
Subtle-thoughted, myriad-minded.  
My friend, with you to live alone,  
Were how much better than to own  
A crown, a sceptre, and a throne !  
O strengthen me, enlighten me !  
I faint in this obscurity,  
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

## SONG.

## I.

A SPIRIT haunts the year's last hours  
Dwelling amid these yellowing bowers  
To himself he talks ;  
For at eventide, listening earnestly,  
At his work you may hear him sob and  
sigh  
In the walks ;  
Earthward he boweth the heavy  
stalks  
Of the mouldering flowers :  
Heavily hangs the broad sunflower  
Over its grave i' the earth so chilly ;  
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,  
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

## II.

The air is damp, and hush'd, and close,  
As a sick man's room when he taketh  
repose  
An hour before death ;  
My very heart faints and my whole  
soul grieves  
At the moist rich smell of the rotting  
leaves,  
And the breath  
Of the fading edges of box beneath,  
And the year's last rose.  
Heavily hangs the broad sunflower  
Over its grave i' the earth so chilly ;  
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,  
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

## ADELINE.

## I.

MYSTERY of mysteries,  
Faintly smiling Adeline,  
Scarce of earth nor all divine,  
Nor unhappy, nor at rest,  
But beyond expression fair  
With thy floating flaxen hair ;  
Thy rose-lips and full blue eyes  
Take the heart from out my breast.  
Wherefore those dim looks of thine,  
Shadowy, dreaming Adeline ?

## II.

Whence that aery bloom of thine,  
Like a lily which the sun  
Looks thro' in his sad decline,  
And a rose-bush leans upon,  
Thou that faintly smilest still,  
As a Naiad in a well,  
Looking at the set of day,  
Or a phantom two hours old  
Of a maiden past away,  
Ere the placid lips be cold ?  
Wherefore those faint smiles of thine,  
Spiritual Adeline ?

## III.

What hope or fear or joy is thine?  
 Who talketh with thee, Adeline?  
 For sure thou art not all alone:  
 Do beating hearts of salient springs  
 Keep measure with thine own?  
 Hast thou heard the butterflies  
 What they say betwixt their wings?  
 Or in stillest evenings  
 With what voice the violet wooes  
 To his heart the silver dew?  
 Or when little airs arise,  
 How the merry bluebell rings  
 To the mosses underneath?  
 Hast thou look'd upon the breath  
 Of the lilies at sunrise?

Wherefore that faint smile of thine,  
 Shadowy, dreaming Adeline?

## IV.

Some honey-converse feeds thy mind,  
 Some spirit of a crimson rose  
 In love with thee forgets to close  
 His curtains, wasting odorous sighs  
 All night long on darkness blind.  
 What aileth thee? whom waitest thou  
 With thy soften'd, shadow'd brow,  
 And those dew-lit eyes of thine,  
 Thou faint smiler, Adeline?

## V.

Lovest thou the doleful wind  
 When thou gazest at the skies?  
 Doth the low-tongued Orient  
 Wander from the side of the morn,  
 Dripping with Sabæan spice  
 On thy pillow, lowly bent  
 With melodious airs lovorn,  
 Breathing Light against thy face,  
 While his locks a-drooping twined  
 Round thy neck in subtle ring  
 Make a carcanet of rays,  
 And ye talk together still,  
 In the language wherewith Spring  
 Letters cowslips on the hill?  
 Hence that look and smile of thine,  
 Spiritual Adeline.

## A CHARACTER.

With a half-glance upon the sky  
 At night he said, "The wanderings  
 Of this most intricate Universe  
 Teach me the nothingness of things."  
 Yet could not all creation pierce  
 Beyond the bottom of his eye.

He spake of beauty: that the dull  
 Saw no divinity in grass,  
 Life in dead stones, or spirit in air;  
 Then looking as 'twere in a glass,  
 He smooth'd his chin and sleek'd his  
 hair,  
 And said the earth was beautiful.

He spake of virtue: not the gods  
 More purely, when they wish to charm  
 Pallas and Juno sitting by:  
 And with a sweeping of the arm,  
 And a lack-lustre dead-blue eye,  
 Devolved his rounded periods.

Most delicately hour by hour  
 He canvass'd human mysteries,  
 And trod on silk, as if the winds  
 Blew his own praises in his eyes,  
 And stood aloof from other minds  
 In impotence of fancied power.

With lips depress'd as he were meek,  
 Himself unto himself he sold:  
 Upon himself himself did feed:  
 Quiet, dispassionate, and cold,  
 And other than his form of creed,  
 With chisell'd features clear and  
 sleek.

## THE POET.

THE poet in a golden clime was born,  
 With golden stars above;  
 Dower'd with the hate of hate, the  
 scorn of scorn,  
 The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death; thro'  
 good and ill,  
 He saw thro' his own soul.

The marvel of the everlasting will,  
 An open scroll,

Before him lay: with echoing feet he  
 threaded

The secretest walks of fame:  
 The viewless arrows of his thoughts  
 were headed

And wing'd with flame,  
 Like Indian reeds blown from his sil-  
 ver tongue,

And of so fierce a flight,  
 From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,  
 Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which  
 bore

Them earthward till they lit;  
 Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field  
 flower,

The fruitful wit

Cleaving, took root, and springing  
 forth anew

Where'er they fell, behold,  
 Like to the mother plant in semblance,  
 grew

A flower all gold,

And bravely furnish'd all abroad to  
 fling

The winged shafts of truth,  
 To throng with stately blooms the  
 breathing spring  
 Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs  
 with beams,

Tho' one did fling the fire.

Heaven flow'd upon the soul in many  
 dreams

Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the  
 world

Like one great garden show'd,  
 And thro' the wreaths of floating dark  
 upcurl'd,

Rare sunrise flow'd.

And Freedom rear'd in that august  
sunrise  
Her beautiful bold brow,  
When rites and forms before his burn-  
ing eyes  
Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden  
robes  
Sunn'd by those orient skies;  
But round about the circles of the  
globes  
Of her keen eyes.

And in her raiment's hem was traced  
in flame  
Wisdom, a name to shake  
All evil dreams of power—a sacred  
name.

And when she spake,  
Her words did gather thunder as they  
ran,  
And as the lightning to the thun-  
der

Which follows it, riving the spirit of  
man,  
Making earth wender,

So was their meaning to her words. No  
sword  
Of wrath her right arm whir'ld;  
But one poor poet's scroll, and with his  
word  
She shook the world.

#### THE POET'S MIND.

##### I.

VEX not thou the poet's mind  
With thy shallow wit:  
Vex not thou the poet's mind;  
For thou canst not fathom it.  
Clear and bright it should be ever,  
Flowing like a crystal river;  
Bright as light, and clear as wind.

##### II.

Dark-brew'd sophist, come not anear,  
All the place is holy ground;  
Hellow smile and frozen sneer  
Come not here.

Holy water will I pour  
Into every spicy flower  
Of the laurel-shrubs that hedge it  
around.

The flowers would faint at your cruel  
cheer.

In your eye there is death,  
There is frost in your breath  
Which would blight the plants.  
Where you stand you cannot hear  
From the groves within  
The wild-bird's din.

In the heart of the garden the merry  
bird chants,  
It would fall to the ground if you came  
in.

In the middle leaps a fountain  
Like sheet lightning,  
Ever brightening  
With a low melodious thunder;

All day and all night it is ever drawn  
From the brain of the purple moun-  
tain

Which stands in the distance yonder:  
It springs on a level of bowery lawn,  
And the mountain draws it from  
Heaven above,

And it sings a song of undying love;  
And yet, tho' its voice be so clear and  
full,  
You never would hear it; your ears  
are so dull;

So keep where you are: you are foul  
with sin;  
It would shrink to the earth if you  
came in.

#### THE SEA-FAIRIES.

SLOW sail'd the weary mariners and  
saw,  
Betwixt the green brink and the run-  
ning foam,  
Sweet faces, rounded arms, and bosoms  
prest

To little harps of gold; and while they  
mused,  
Whispering to each other half in fear,  
Shrill music reach'd them on the mid-  
dle sea.

Whither away, whither away, whither  
away? fly no more.

Whither away from the high green  
field, and the happy blossoming  
shore?

Day and night to the billow the foun-  
tain calls;  
Down shower the gambolling water-  
falls

From wandering over the lea:  
Out of the live-green heart of the dells  
They freshen the silvery-crimson  
shells,

And thick with white bells the clover-  
hill swells

High over the full-toned sea:  
O hither, come hither and furl your  
sails,

Come hither to me and to me:  
Hither, come hither and frolic and  
play;

Here it is only the mew that wails;  
We will sing to you all the day:  
Mariner, mariner, furl your sails,  
For here are the blissful downs and  
dales,

And merrily, merrily carol the gales,  
And the spangle dances in bight and  
bay,  
And the rainbow forms and flies on the  
land

Over the islands free;  
And the rainbow lives in the curve of  
the sand;

Hither, come hither and see;  
And the rainbow hangs on the poising  
wave,  
And sweet is the color of cove and  
cave,

And sweet shall your welcome be :  
O hither, come hither and be our lords,  
For merry brides are we :  
We will kiss sweet kisses, and speak  
sweet words :

O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten  
With pleasure and love and jubilee :  
O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten  
When the sharp clear twang of the  
golden chords

Runs up the ridged sea.

Who can light on as happy a shore  
All the world o'er, all the world o'er ?  
Wither away ? listen and stay : mar-  
iner, mariner, fly no more.

### THE DESERTED HOUSE.

I.  
Life and Thought have gone away  
Side by side,  
Leaving door and windows wide :  
Careless tenants they !

II.  
All within is dark as night :  
In the windows is no light ;  
And no murmur at the door,  
So frequent on its hinge before.

III.  
Close the door, the shutters close,  
Or thro' the windows we shall see  
The nakedness and vacancy  
Of the dark deserted house.

IV.  
Come away : no more of mirth  
Is here or merry-making sound.  
The house was builded of the earth,  
And shall fall again to ground.

V.  
Come away : for Life and Thought  
Here no longer dwell ;  
But in a city glorious—  
A great and distant city—have bought  
A mansion incorruptible.  
Would they could have stayed with  
us !

### THE DYING SWAN.

I.  
The plain was grassy, wild and bare,  
Wide, wild, and open to the air,  
Which had built up everywhere  
An under-roof of doleful gray.  
With an inner voice the river ran,  
Adown it floated a dying swan,  
And loudly did lament.  
It was the middle of the day.  
Ever the weary wind went on,  
And took the reed-tops as it went.

II.  
Some blue peaks in the distance rose,  
And white against the cold-white sky,  
Shone out their crowning snows,  
One willow over the river wept,  
And shook the wave as the wind did  
sigh ;  
Above in the wind was the swallow,  
Chasing itself at its own wild will,  
And far thro' the marish green and  
still

The tangled water-courses slept,  
Shot over with purple, and green, and  
yellow.

### III

The wild swan's death-hymn took the  
soul  
Of that waste place with joy  
Hidden in sorrow : at first to the ear  
The warble was low, and full and clear ;  
And floating about the under-sky,  
Prevailing in weakness, the coronach  
stole

Sometimes afar, and sometimes anear ;  
But anon her awful jubilant voice,  
With a music strange and manifold,  
Flow'd forth on a carol free and bold ;  
As when a mighty people rejoice  
With shawms, and with cymbals, and  
harps of gold,  
And the tumult of their acclaim is  
roll'd

Thro' the open gates of the city afar,  
To the shepherd who watcheth the eve-  
ning star.  
And the creeping mosses and clamber-  
ing weeds,  
And the willow-branches hoar and  
dank,  
And the wavy swell of the souging  
reeds,  
And the wave-worn horns of the echo-  
ing bank,  
And the silvery marish-flowers that  
throng  
The desolate creeks and pools among,  
Were flooded over with eddying song.

### A DIRGE.

I.  
Now is done thy long day's work ;  
Fold thy palms across thy breast,  
Fold thine arms, turn to thy rest.  
Let them rave.  
Shadows of the silver birk  
Sweep the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

II.  
Thee nor carketh care nor slander ;  
Nothing but the small cold worm  
Fretteth thine enshrouded form.  
Let them rave.  
Light and shadow ever wander  
O'er the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

III.  
Thou wilt not turn upon thy bed ;  
Chanteth not the brooding bee  
Sweeter tones than calumny ?  
Let them rave.  
Thou wilt never raise thine head  
From the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

IV.  
Crocodiles wept tears for thee ;  
The woodbine and eglaree  
Drip sweeter dews than traitor's tear.  
Let them rave.

Rain makes music in the tree  
O'er the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

## V.

Round thee blow, self-pleached deep,  
Bramble roses, faint and pale,  
And long purples of the dale.  
Let them rave.  
These in every shower creep  
Thro' the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

## VI.

The gold-eyed kingcups fine ;  
The frail bluebell peereth over  
Rare broidry of the purple clover.  
Let them rave.  
Kings have no such couch as thine,  
As the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

## VII.

Wild words wander here and there :  
God's great gift of speech abused  
Makes thy memory confused :  
But let them rave.  
The balm-cricket carols clear  
In the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

## LOVE AND DEATH.

WHAT time the mighty moon was  
gathering light  
Love paced the thymy plots of Paradise,  
And all about him roll'd his lustrous  
eyes ;  
When, turning round a cassia, full in  
view  
Death, walking all alone beneath a  
yew,  
And talking to himself, first met his  
sight :  
" You must begone," said Death,  
" these walks are mine."  
Love wept and spread his sheeny vans  
for flight ;  
Yet ere he parted said, " This hour is  
thine :  
Thou art the shadow of life, and as the  
tree  
Stands in the sun and shadows all  
beneath,  
So in the light of great eternity  
Life eminent creates the shade of  
death ;  
The shadow passeth when the tree  
shall fall,  
But I shall reign for ever over all."

## THE BALLAD OF ORIANA.

My heart is wasted with my woe,  
Oriana.  
There is no rest for me below,  
Oriana.  
When the long dun wolds are ribb'd  
with snow.

And loud the Norland whirlwinds  
blow.

Oriana,  
Alone I wander to and fro,  
Oriana.

Ere the light on dark was growing,  
Oriana,  
At midnight the cock was crowing,  
Oriana :  
Winds were blowing, waters flowing,  
We heard the steeds to battle going,  
Oriana ;  
Aloud the hollow bugle blowing,  
Oriana.

In the yew-wood black as night,  
Oriana,  
Ere I rode into the fight,  
Oriana,  
While blissful tears blinded my sight  
By star-shine and by moonlight,  
Oriana,  
I to thee my troth did plight,  
Oriana.

She stood upon the castle wall,  
Oriana :  
She watch'd my crest among them all,  
Oriana :  
She saw me fight, she heard me call,  
When forth there stept a foeman tall,  
Oriana,  
Atween me and the castle wall,  
Oriana.

The bitter arrow went aside,  
Oriana :  
The false, false arrow went aside,  
Oriana :  
The damned arrow glanced aside,  
And pierced thy heart, my love, my  
bride.  
Oriana !  
Thy heart, my life, my love, my bride,  
Oriana !

Oh ! narrow, narrow was the space,  
Oriana.  
Loud, loud rung out the bugle's brays,  
Oriana.  
Oh ! deathful stabs were dealt apace,  
The battle deepen'd in its place,  
Oriana ;  
But I was down upon my face,  
Oriana.

They should have stabb'd me where I  
lay,  
Oriana !  
How could I rise and come away,  
Oriana ?  
How could I look upon the day ?  
They should have stabb'd me where I  
lay,

Oriana—  
They should have trod me into clay,  
Oriana.

O breaking heart that will not break,  
Oriana !  
O pale, pale face so sweet and meek,  
Oriana !

Thou smilest, but thou dost not speak,  
And then the tears run down my cheek,  
Oriana :

What wantest thou ? whom dost thou  
seek,

Oriana ?

I cry aloud : none hear my cries,  
Oriana.

Thou comest atween me and the skies,  
Oriana.

I feel the tears of blood arise  
Up from my heart unto my eyes,  
Oriana.

Within thy heart my arrow lies,  
Oriana.

O cursed hand ! O cursed blow !  
Oriana !

O happy thou that liest low,  
Oriana !

All night the silence seems to flow  
Beside me in my utter woe,  
Oriana.

A weary, weary way I go,  
Oriana.

When Norland winds pipe down the  
sea,

Oriana,  
I walk, I dare not think of thee,  
Oriana.

Thou liest beneath the greenwood tree,  
I dare not die and come to thee,  
Oriana.

I hear the roaring of the sea,  
Oriana.

#### CIRCUMSTANCE.

Two children in two neighbor villages  
Playing mad pranks along the heathy  
leas ;

Two strangers meeting at a festival ;  
Two lovers whispering by an orchard  
wall ;

Two lives bound fast in one with gold-  
en ease ;

Two graves grass-green beside a gray  
church-tower,

Wash'd with still rains and daisy-blos-  
somed ;

Two children in one hamlet born and  
bred ;

So runs the round of life from hour to  
hour.

#### THE MERMAN.

##### I.

Who would be,  
A merman bold,  
Sitting alone,  
Singing alone,  
Under the sea,  
With a crown of gold,  
On a throne ?

##### II.

I would be a merman bold ;  
I would sit and sing the whole of the  
day ;

I would fill the sea-halls with a voice  
of power ;

But at night I would roam abroad and  
play

With the mermaids in and out of the  
rocks,

Dressing their hair with the white sea-  
flower ;

And holding them back by their flow-  
ing locks

I would kiss them often under the sea,  
And kiss them again till they kiss'd me

Laughingly, laughingly ;

And then we would wander away, away  
To the pale-green sea-groves straight  
and high,

Chasing each other merrily.

##### III.

There would be neither moon nor star ;  
But the wave would make music  
above us afar—

Low thunder and light in the magic  
night—

Neither moon nor star.

We would call aloud in the dreamy  
dells,

Call to each other and whoop and cry  
All night, merrily, merrily ;

They would pelt me with starry span-  
gles and shells,

Laughing and clapping their hands  
between,

All night, merrily, merrily :

But I would throw to them back in  
mine

Turkis and agate and almondine :

Then leaping out upon them unseen  
I would kiss them often under the

sea,

And kiss them again till they kiss'd  
me

Laughingly, laughingly.

O, what a happy life were mine

Under the hollow-hung ocean green !

Soft are the moss-beds under the sea ;

We would live merrily, merrily.

#### THE MERMAID.

##### I.

Who would be  
A mermaid fair,  
Singing alone,  
Combing her hair  
Under the sea,  
In a golden curl  
With a comb of pearl,  
On a throne ?

##### II.

I would be a mermaid fair ;  
I would sing to myself the whole of the  
day ;

With a comb of pearl I would comb my  
hair ;

And still as I comb'd I would sing and  
say,

"Who is it loves me ? who loves not  
me ?"

I would comb my hair till my ringlets  
 would fall  
 Low adown, low adown,  
 From under my starry sea-bud crown  
 Low adown and around,  
 And I should look like a fountain of  
 gold  
 Springing alone  
 With a shrill inner sound,  
 Over the throne  
 In the midst of the hall ;  
 Till that great sea-snake under the sea  
 From his coiled sleeps in the central  
 deeps  
 Would slowly trail himself sevenfold  
 Round the hall where I sate, and look  
 in at the gate  
 With his large calm eyes for the love  
 of me.  
 And all the mermen under the sea  
 Would feel their immortality  
 Die in their hearts for the love of me.

## III.

But at night I would wander away,  
 away,  
 I would fling on each side my low-flow-  
 ing locks,  
 And lightly vault from the throne and  
 play  
 With the mermen in and out of the  
 rocks ;  
 We would run to and fro, and hide and  
 seek,  
 On the broad sea-wolds in the crimson  
 shells,  
 Whose silvery spikes are nighest the  
 sea.  
 But if any came near I would call, and  
 shriek,  
 And adown the steep like a wave I  
 would leap  
 From the diamond-ledges that jut from  
 the dells ;  
 For I would not be kiss'd by all who  
 would list,  
 Of the bold merry mermen under the  
 sea ;  
 They would sue me, and woo me, and  
 flatter me,  
 In the purple twilights under the sea ;  
 But the king of them all would carry  
 me,  
 Woo me, and win me, and marry me,  
 In the branching jaspers under the  
 sea ;  
 Then all the dry pied things that be  
 In the hueless mosses under the sea  
 Would curl round my silver feet  
 silently,  
 All looking up for the love of me.  
 And if I should carol aloud, from aloft  
 All things that are forked, and horned,  
 and soft  
 Would lean out from the hollow sphere  
 of the sea  
 All looking down for the love of me.

## SONNET TO J. M. K.

My hope and heart is with thee—thou  
 wilt be  
 A latter Luther, and a soldier-priest  
 To scare church-harpies from the mas-  
 ter's feast ;  
 Our dusted velvets have much need of  
 thee :  
 Thou art no sabbath-drawler of old  
 saws,  
 Distill'd from some worm-canker'd  
 homily ;  
 But spur'd at heart with fieriest en-  
 ergy  
 To embattail and to wall about thy  
 cause  
 With iron-worded proof, hating to hark  
 The humming of the drowsy pulpit-  
 drone  
 Half God's good sabbath, while the  
 worn-out clerk  
 Brow-beats his desk below. Thou from  
 a throne  
 Mounted in heaven wilt shoot into the  
 dark  
 Arrows of lightnings. I will stand and  
 mark.

## THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

## PART I.

ON either side the river lie  
 Long fields of barley and of rye,  
 That clothe the wold and meet the sky ;  
 And thro' the field the road runs by  
 To many-tower'd Camelot ;  
 And up and down the people go,  
 Gazing where the lilies blow  
 Round an island there below  
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,  
 Little breezes dusk and shiver  
 Thro' the wave that runs for ever  
 By the island in the river  
 Flowing down to Camelot.  
 Four gray walls, and four gray towers,  
 Overlook a space of flowers,  
 And the silent isle imbowers  
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,  
 Slide the heavy barges trail'd  
 By slow horses ; and unhail'd  
 The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd  
 Skimming down to Camelot :  
 But who hath seen her wave her hand ?  
 Or at the casement seen her stand ?  
 Or is she known in all the land,  
 The Lady of Shalott ?

Only reapers, reaping early  
 In among the bearded barley,  
 Hear a song that echoes cheerly  
 From the river winding clearly,  
 Down to tower'd Camelot :  
 And by the moon the reaper weary,  
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,  
 Listening, whispers " 'Tis the fairy  
 Lady of Shalott."

PART II.

THERE she weaves by night and day  
A magic web with colors gay.  
She has heard a whisper say,  
A curse is on her if she stay  
To look down to Camelot.  
She knows not what the curse may be,  
And so she weaveth steadily,  
And little other care hath she.  
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear  
That hangs before her all the year,  
Shadows of the world appear.  
There she sees the highway near  
Winding down to Camelot:  
There the river eddy whirls,  
And there the surly village-churls,  
And the red cloaks of market-girls,  
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,  
An abbot on an ambling pad,  
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,  
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,  
Goes by to tower'd Camelot;  
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue  
The knights come riding two and two:  
She hath no loyal knight and true,  
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights  
To weave the mirror's magic sights,  
For often thro' the silent night  
A funeral, with plumes and lights,  
And music, went to Camelot:  
Or when the moon was overhead,  
Came two young lovers lately wed;  
"I am half sick of shadows," said  
The Lady of Shalott.

PART III.

A BOW-SHOT from her bower-eaves,  
He rode between the barley-sheaves,  
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,  
And flamed upon the brazen greaves  
Of bold Sir Lancelot.  
A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd  
To a lady in his shield,  
That sparkled on the yellow field,  
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,  
Like to some branch of stars we see  
Hung in the golden Galaxy.  
The bridle bells rang merrily  
As he rode down to Camelot  
And from his blazon'd baldric slung  
A mighty silver bugle hung,  
And as he rode his armor rung,  
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather  
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leath-  
er,  
The helmet and the helmet feather  
Burned like one burning flame to-  
gether,  
As he rode down to Camelot.  
As often thro' the purple night,

Below the starry clusters bright,  
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,  
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight  
glow'd;  
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse  
trode;  
From underneath his helmet flow'd  
His coal-black curls as on he rode,  
As he rode down to Camelot.  
From the bank and from the river  
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,  
"Tirra lirra," by the river  
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,  
She made three paces thro' the room,  
She saw the water-lily bloom,  
She saw the helmet and the plume,  
She look'd down to Camelot.  
Out flew the web and floated wide;  
The mirror crack'd from side to side;  
"The curse is come upon me," cried  
The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV.

In the stormy east-wind straining,  
The pale yellow woods were waning,  
The broad stream in his banks com-  
plaining,  
Heavily the low sky raining  
Over tower'd Camelot;  
Down she came and found a boat  
Beneath a willow left afloat,  
And round about the prow she wrote  
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse--  
Like some bold seer in a trance,  
Seeing all his own mischance--  
With a glassy countenance  
Did she look to Camelot.  
And at the closing of the day  
She loos'd the chain, and down she  
lay;  
The broad stream bore her far away,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white  
That loosely flew to left and right--  
The leaves upon her falling light--  
Thro' the noises of the night  
She floated down to Camelot:  
And as the boat-head wound along  
The willowy hills and fields among,  
They heard her singing her last song,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
Till her blood was frozen slowly,  
And her eyes were darken'd wholly,  
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot;  
For ere she reach'd upon the tide  
The first house by the water-side,  
Singing in her song she died,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,  
By garden-wall and gallery,

A gleaming shape she floated by,  
Dead-pale between the houses high,  
Silent into Camelot.

Out upon the wharfs they came,  
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,  
And round the prow they read her  
name,

*The Lady of Shalott.*

Who is this? and what is here?  
And in the lighted palace near  
Died the sound of royal cheer;  
And they cross'd themselves for fear,  
All the knights at Camelot;  
But Lancelot mused a little space;  
He said, "She has a lovely face;  
God in his mercy lend her grace,  
The Lady of Shalott."

### MARIANA IN THE SOUTH.

WITH one black shadow at its feet,  
The house thro' all the level shines,  
Close-latticed to the brooding heat,  
And silent in its dusty vines:  
A faint-blue ridge upon the right,  
An empty river-bed before,  
And shallows on a distant shore,  
In glaring sand and inlets bright.

But "Ave Mary," made she moan,  
And "Ave Mary," night and  
morn,

And "Ah," she sang, "to be all  
alone,

To live forgotten, and love for-  
lorn."

She, as her carol sadder grew,  
From brow and bosom slowly down  
Thro' rosy taper fingers drew  
Her streaming curls of deepest  
brown

To left and right, and made appear,  
Still-lighted in a secret shrine,  
Her melancholy eyes divine,  
The home of woe without a tear.

And "Ave Mary," was her moan,  
"Madonna, sad is night and  
morn;"

And "Ah," she sang, "to be all  
alone,

To live forgotten, and love for-  
lorn."

Till all the crimson changed, and past  
Into deep orange o'er the sea,  
Low on her knees herself she cast,  
Before Our Lady murmur'd she;  
Complaining, "Mother, give me grace  
To help me of my weary load."  
And on the liquid mirror glow'd  
The clear perfection of her face.

"Is this the form," she made her  
moan,

"That won his praises night and  
morn?"

And "Ah," she said, "but I  
wake alone,

I sleep forgotten, I wake forlorn."

Nor bird would sing, nor lamb would  
bleat,

Nor any cloud would cross the vault,  
But day increased from heat to heat,  
On stony drought and steaming salt;  
Till now at noon she slept again,  
And seem'd knee-deep in mountain  
grass,

And heard her native breezes pass,  
And runlets babbling down the glen.

She breathed in sleep a lower  
moan,

And murmuring, as at night and  
morn,

She thought, "My spirit is here  
alone,

Walks forgotten, and is forlorn."

Dreaming, she knew it was a dream:

She felt he was and was not there.  
She woke: the babble of the stream

Fell, and, without, the steady glare  
Shrank one sick willow-ere and small.

The river-bed was dusty-white;  
And all the furnace of the light

Struck up against the blinding wall.

She whisper'd, with a stifled moan  
More inward than at night or  
morn,

"Sweet Mother, let me not here  
alone

Live forgotten and die forlorn."

And, rising, from her bosom drew  
Old letters, breathing of her worth,  
For "Love," they said, "must needs  
be true,

To what is loveliest upon earth."

An image seem'd to pass the door,  
To look at her with slight, and say,

"But now thy beauty flows away,  
So be alone for evermore."

"O cruel heart," she changed her  
tone,

"And cruel love, whose end is  
scorn,

Is this the end to be left alone,  
To live forgotten, and die for-  
lorn!"

But sometimes in the falling day  
An image seem'd to pass the door,

To look into her eyes and say,  
"But thou shalt be alone no more."

And flaming downward over all  
From heat to heat the day decreased,

And slowly rounded to the east  
The one black shadow from the wall.

"The day to-night," she made her  
moan,

"The day to-night, the night to  
morn,

And day and night I am left alone  
To live forgotten, and love for-  
lorn."

At eve a dry cicala sung,  
There came a sound as of the sea;

Backward the lattice-blind she flung,  
And lean'd upon the balcony.

There all in spaces rosy-bright  
Large Hesper glitter'd on her tears,

And deepening thro' the silent  
spheres,

Heaven over Heaven rose the night.  
 And weeping then she made her  
 moan,  
 "The night comes on that knows  
 not morn,  
 When I shall cease to be all alone,  
 To live forgotten, and love for-  
 lorn."

## ELEANORE.

## I.

THY dark eyes open'd not,  
 Nor first reveal'd themselves to Eng-  
 lish air,  
 For there is nothing here,  
 Which, from the outward to the inward  
 brought,  
 Moulded thy baby thought.  
 Far off from human neighborhood,  
 Thou wert born, on a summer morn,  
 A mile beneath the cedar-wood.  
 Thy bounteous forehead was not fann'd  
 With breezes from our oaken glades,  
 But thou wert nursed in some delicious  
 land  
 Of lavish lights, and floating shades:  
 And flattering thy childish thought  
 The oriental fairy brought,  
 At the moment of thy birth,  
 From old well-heads of haunted rills,  
 And the hearts of purple hills,  
 And c. ylow'd coves on a sunny  
 shore,  
 The choicest wealth of all the  
 earth,  
 Jewel or shell, or starry ore,  
 To deck thy cradle, Eleånore.

## II.

Or the yellow-banded bees,  
 Thro' half-open lattices  
 Coming in the scented breeze,  
 Fed thee, a child, lying alone,  
 With whitest honey in fairy gardens  
 cull'd—  
 A glorious child, dreaming alone,  
 In silk-soft folds, upon yielding  
 down,  
 With the hum of swarming bees  
 Into dreamful slumber lull'd.

## III.

Who may minister to thee?  
 Summer herself should minister  
 To thee, with fruitage golden-  
 rinded  
 On golden salvers, or it may be,  
 Youngest Autumn, in a bower  
 Grape-thicken'd from the light, and  
 blinded  
 With many a deep-hued bell-like  
 flower  
 Of fragrant trailers, when the air  
 Sleepeth over all the heaven,  
 And the crag that fronts the Even,  
 All along the shadowy shore,  
 Crimsoned over an inland mere,  
 Eleånore !

## IV.

How may full-sail'd verse express,  
 How may measured words adore  
 The full-flowing harmony  
 Of thy swan-like stateliness,  
 Eleånore ?  
 The luxuriant symmetry  
 Of thy floating gracefulness,  
 Eleånore ?  
 Every turn and glance of thine,  
 Every lineament divine,  
 Eleånore,  
 And the steady sunset glow,  
 That stays upon thee? For in thee  
 Is nothing sudden, nothing single :  
 Like two streams of incense free  
 From one censer, in one shrine,  
 Thought and motion mingle,  
 Mingle ever. Motions flow  
 To one another, even as tho'  
 They were modulated so  
 To an unheard melody,  
 Which lives about thee, and a sweep  
 Of richest pauses, evermore  
 Drawn from each other mellow-deep ;  
 Who may express thee, Eleånore ?

## V.

I stand before thee, Eleånore ;  
 I see thy beauty gradually unfold,  
 Daily and hourly, more and more.  
 I muse, as in a trance, the while  
 Slowly, as from a cloud of gold  
 Comes out thy deep ambrosial smile.  
 I muse, as in a trance, when'er  
 The languors of the love-deep eyes  
 Float on to me. I would I were  
 So tranced, so rapt in ecstasies,  
 To stand apart, and to adore,  
 Gazing on thee for evermore,  
 Serene, imperial Eleånore !

## VI.

Sometimes, with most intensity  
 Gazing, I seem to see  
 Thought folded over thought, smiling  
 asleep  
 Slowly awaken'd, grow so full and deep  
 In thy large eyes, that, overpower'd  
 quite,  
 I cannot veil, or droop my sight,  
 But am as nothing in its light :  
 As tho' a star, in inmost heaven set,  
 Ev'n while we gaze on it,  
 Should slowly round his orb, and slowly  
 grow  
 To a full face, there like a sun remain  
 Fix'd—then as slowly fade again,  
 And draw itself to what it was be-  
 fore ;  
 So full, so deep, so slow,  
 Thought seems to come and go  
 In thy large eyes, imperial Eleä-  
 nore.

## VII.

As thunder-clouds that, hung on high,  
 Roof'd the world with doubt and  
 fear,  
 Floating thro' an evening atmosphere,  
 Grow golden all about the sky ;

In thee all passion becomes passionless,  
 Touch'd by thy spirit's mellowness,  
 In a silent meditation,  
 Falling into a still delight,  
 And luxury of contemplation :  
 As waves that up a quiet cove  
 Rolling slide, and lying still  
 Shadow forth the banks at will :  
 Or sometimes they swell and move,  
 Pressing up against the land,  
 With motions of the outer sea :  
 And the self-same influence  
 Controlleth all the soul and sense  
 Of Passion gazing upon thee.  
 His bow-strings lacken'd, languid Love,  
 Leaning his cheek upon his hand,  
 Droops both his wings, regarding thee,  
 And so would languish evermore,  
 Serene, imperial Eleánore.

## VIII.

But when I see thee roam, with tresses  
 unconfined,  
 While the amorous, odorous wind  
 Breathes low between the sunset  
 and the moon  
 Or, in a shadowy saloon,  
 On silken cushions half reclined ;  
 I watch thy grace ; and in its place  
 My heart a charmed slumber keeps,  
 While I muse upon thy face ;  
 And a languid fire creeps  
 Thro' my veins to all my frame,  
 Dissolvingly and slowly : soon  
 From thy rose-red lips my name  
 Floveth : and then, as in a swoon,  
 With dinning sound my ears are rife,  
 My tremulous tongue faltereth,  
 I lose my color, I lose my breath,  
 I drink the cup of a costly death,  
 Brimm'd with delicious draughts of  
 warmest life.  
 I die with my delight, before  
 I hear what I would hear from thee ;  
 Yet tell my name again to me,  
 I would be dying evermore,  
 So dying ever, Eleánore.

## THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

I SEE the wealthy miller yet,  
 His double chin, his portly size,  
 And who that knew him could forget  
 The busy wrinkles round his eyes ?  
 The slow wise smile that, round about  
 His lusty forehead dryly curl'd,  
 Seem'd half-within and half-without,  
 And full of dealings with the world ?  
 In vonder chair I see him sit,  
 Three fingers round the old silver  
 cup—  
 I see his gray eyes twinkle yet  
 At his own jest—gray eyes lit up  
 With summer lightnings of a soul  
 So full of summer warmth, so glad,  
 So healthy, sound, and clear and whole,  
 His memory scarce can make me sad.  
 Yet fill my glass : give me one kiss :  
 My own sweet Alice, we must die.

There's somewhat in this world amiss  
 Shall be unriddled by and by.  
 There's somewhat flows to us in life,  
 But more is taken quite away.  
 Pray, Alice, pray, my darling wife,  
 That we may die the self-same day.  
 Have I not found a happy earth ?  
 I least should breathe a thought of  
 pain.  
 Would God renew me from my birth  
 I'd almost live my life again.  
 So sweet it seems with thee to walk,  
 And once again to woo thee mine—  
 It seems in after-dinner talk  
 Across the walnuts and the wine —  
 To be the long and listless boy  
 Late-left an orphan of the squire,  
 Where this old mansion mounted high  
 Looks down upon the village spire :  
 For even here, where I and you  
 Have lived and loved alone so long,  
 Each morn my sleep was broken thro'  
 By some wild skylark's matin song.  
 And oft I heard the tender dove  
 In firry woodlands making moan ;  
 But ere I saw your eyes, my love,  
 I had no motion of my own.  
 For scarce my life with fancy play'd  
 Before I dream'd that pleasant  
 dream—  
 Still hither thither idly sway'd  
 Like those long mosses in the stream.  
 Or from the bridge I leaned to hear  
 The milldam rushing down with  
 noise,  
 And see the minnows everywhere  
 In crystal eddies glance and poise,  
 The tall flag-flowers when they sprung  
 Below the range of stepping stones,  
 Or those three chestnuts near, that  
 hung  
 In masses thick with milky cones.  
 But, Alice, what an hour was that,  
 When after roving in the woods  
 ('Twas April then), I came and sat  
 Below the chestnuts, when their buds  
 Were glistening to the breezy blue ;  
 And on the slope, an absent fool,  
 I cast me down, nor thought of you,  
 But angled in the higher pool.  
 A love-song I had somewhere read,  
 An echo from a measured strain,  
 Beat time to nothing in my head  
 From some odd corner of the brain.  
 It haunted me, the morning long,  
 With weary sameness in the rhymes,  
 The phantom of a silent song,  
 That went and came a thousand  
 times.  
 Then leapt a trout. In lazy mood  
 I watch'd the little circles die ;  
 They past into the level flood,  
 And there a vision caught my eye ;  
 The reflex of a beauteous form,  
 A glowing arm, a gleaming neck,  
 As when a sunbeam wavers warm  
 Within the dark and dimpled beck.

For you remember, you had set,  
That morning, on the casement-edge  
A long green box of mignonette,  
And you were leaning from the ledge:  
And when I raised my eyes, above  
They met with two so full and bright—  
Such eyes! I swear to you, my love,  
That these have never lost their light.

I loved, and love dispell'd the fear  
That I should die an early death:  
For love possess'd the atmosphere,  
And fill'd the breast with purer breath.  
My mother thought, What ails the boy?  
For I was altered and began  
To move about the house with joy,  
And with the certain step of man.

I loved the brimming wave that swam  
'Thro' quiet meadows round the mill,  
The sleepy pool above the dam,  
The pool beneath it never still,  
The meal-sacks on the whiten'd floor,  
The dark round of the dripping wheel,  
The very air about the door  
Made misty with the floating meal.

And oft in ramblings on the wold,  
When April nights began to blow,  
And April's crescent glimmer'd cold,  
I saw the village lights below;  
I knew your taper far away,  
And full at heart of trembling hope,  
From off the wold I came, and lay  
Upon the freshly-flower'd slope.

The deep brook groan'd beneath the mill;  
And "by that lamp," I thought, "she  
sits!"

The white chalk-quarry from the hill  
Gleam'd to the flying moon by fits.  
"O that I were beside her now!  
O, will she answer if I call?  
O, would she give me vow for vow,  
Sweet Alice, if I told her all?"

Sometimes I saw you sit and spin;  
And, in the pauses of the wind,  
Sometimes I heard you sing within;  
Sometimes your shadow cross'd the  
blind.

At last you rose and moved the light,  
And the long shadow of the chair  
Flitted across into the night,  
And all the casement darken'd there.

But when at last I dared to speak,  
The lanes, you know, were white  
with May,

Your ripe lips moved not, but your  
cheek

Flush'd like the coming of the day;  
And so it was—half-sly, half-shy.

You would and would not, little one!  
Although I pleaded tenderly,  
And you and I were all alone.

And slowly was my mother brought  
To yield consent to my desire:  
She wish'd me happy, but she thought  
I might have look'd a little higher;  
And I was young—too young to wed:

"Yet must I love her for your sake;  
Go fetch your Alice here," she said:  
Her eyelid quiver'd as she spake.

And down I went to fetch my bride:  
But, Alice, you were ill at ease;  
This dress and that by turns you tried,  
Too fearful that you should not  
please.

I loved you better for your fears,  
I knew you could not look but well;  
And dews, that would have fall'n in  
tears,  
I kiss'd away before they fell.

I watch'd the little flutterings,  
The doubt my mother would not set;  
She spoke at large of many things,  
And at the last she spoke of me;  
And turning look'd upon your face,  
As near this door you sat apart,  
And rose, and, with a silent grace  
Approaching, press'd you heart to  
heart.

Ah, well—but sing the foolish song  
I gave you, Alice, on the day  
When, arm in arm, we went along,  
A pensive pair, and you were gay  
With bridal flowers—that I may seem,  
As in the nights of old, to lie  
Beside the mill-wheel in the stream,  
While those full chestnuts whisper  
by.

It is the miller's daughter,  
And she is grown so dear, so dear,  
That I would be the jewel  
That trembles at her ear,  
For hid in ringlets day and night,  
I'd touch her neck so warm and  
white.

And I would be the girdle  
About her dainty dainty waist,  
And her heart would beat against  
me,

In sorrow and in rest.  
And I should know if it beat right,  
I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,  
And all day long to fall and rise  
Upon her balmy bosom,  
With her laughter or her sighs,  
And I would lie so light, so light,  
I scarce should be unclasp'd at night.

A trifle, sweet! which true love spells—  
True love interprets—right alone.  
His light upon the letter dwells,  
For all the spirit is his own.  
So if I waste words now, in truth  
You must blame Love. His early rage  
Had force to make me rhyme in youth  
And makes me talk too much in age.

And now those vivid hours are gone,  
Like my own life to me thou art,  
Where Past and Present, wound in one  
Do make a garland for the heart:  
So sing that other song I made,

Half-anger'd with my happy lot,  
The day, when in the chesnut shade  
I found the blue Forget-me-not.

Love that hath us in the net  
Can he pass, and we forget ?  
Many suns arise and set.  
Many a chance the years beget.  
Love the gift is Love the debt.

Ever so.

Love is hurt with jar and fret.  
Love is made a vague regret.  
Eyes with idle tears are wet.  
Idle habit links us yet.  
What is love ? for we forget :  
Ah, no ! no !

Look thro' mine eyes with thine. True  
wife,  
Round my true heart thine arms  
entwine ;  
My other dearer life in life,  
Look thro' my very soul with thine !  
Untouch'd with any shade of years.  
May those kind eyes forever dwell !  
They have not shed a many tears,  
Dear eyes, since first I knew them  
well.

Yet tears they shed : they had their  
part  
Of sorrow : for when time was ripe,  
The still affection of the heart  
Became an outward breathing type,  
That into stillness past again.  
And left a want unknown before ;  
Although the loss that brought us pain,  
That loss but made us love the more.

With farther lookings on. The kiss,  
The woven arms, seem but to be  
Weak symbols of the settled bliss,  
The comfort, I have found in thee :  
But that God bless thee, dear—who  
wrought

Two spirits to one equal mind—  
With blessings beyond hope or thought,  
With blessings which no words can  
find.

Arise, and let us wander forth,  
To you old mill across the wolds ;  
For look, the sunset, south and north,  
Winds all the vale in rosy folds,  
And fires your narrow casement glass,  
Touching the sullen pool below :  
On the chalk-hill the bearded grass  
Is dry and dewless. Let us go.

F A T I M A .

O LOVE, Love, Love ! O withering  
might !  
O sun, that from thy noonday height  
Shudderest when I strain my sight,  
Throbbing thro' all thy heat and light,  
Lo, falling from my constant mind,  
Lo, parch'd and wither'd, deaf and  
blind,  
I whirl like leaves in roaring wind.

Last night I wasted hateful hours  
Below the city's eastern towers :  
I thirsted for the brooks, the showers :  
I roll'd among the tender flowers :

I crush'd them on my breast, my  
mouth :

I look'd athwart the burning drouth  
Of that long desert to the south.

Last night when some one spoke his  
name,

From my swift blood that went and  
came

A thousand little shafts of flame  
Were shiver'd in my narrow frame.

O Love, O fire ! once he drew  
With one long kiss my whole soul  
thro'

My lips, as sunlight drinketh dew.

Before he mounts the hill, I know  
He cometh quickly : from below  
Sweet gales, as from deep gardens,  
blow

Before him, striking on my brow.

In my dry brain my spirit soon,  
Down-deepening from swoon to  
swoon,

Faints like a dazzled morning moon.

The wind sounds like a silver wire,  
And from beyond the noon a fire  
Is pour'd upon the hills, and nigher  
The skies stoop down in their desire,  
And, isled in sudden seas of light,  
My heart, pierced thro' with fierce  
delight,

Bursts into blossom in his sight

My whole soul waiting silently,  
All naked in a sultry sky,  
Droops blinded with his shining eye :  
I will possess him or will die.

I will grow round him in his place,  
Grow, live, die looking on his face,  
Die, dying, clasp'd in his embrace.

C E N O N E .

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier  
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.  
The swimming vapor slopes athwart  
the glen,

Puts forth an arm, and creeps from  
pine to pine,

And loiters, slowly drawn. On either  
hand

The lawns and meadow-ledges midway  
down

Hang rich in flowers, and far below  
them roars

The long brook falling thro' the clov'n  
ravine

In cataract after cataract to the sea.  
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus  
Stands up and takes the morning : but  
in front

The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal  
Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,  
The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon  
Mournful C'enone, wandering forlorn

Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.

Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her neck

Floated her hair or seem'd to float in rest.

She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine,

Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-shade

Sloped downward to her seat from the upper cliff.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill :

The grasshopper is silent in the grass:  
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,

Rests like a shadow, and the cicada sleeps.

The purple flowers droop: the golden bee

Is lily-cradled; I alone awake.

My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,

My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,

And I am all awearied of my life.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.

Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills, O Caves

That house the cold crown'd snake! O mountain brooks,

I am the daughter of a River-God,

Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all

My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls

Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,  
A cloud that gather'd shape: for it may be

That, while I speak of it, a little while  
My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.

I waited underneath the dawning hills,  
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,

And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine:

Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,  
Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd,

white-hooved,  
Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Far-off the torrent call'd me from the cleft:

Far up the solitary morning smote  
The streaks of virgin snow. With down-dropt eyes

I sat alone: white-breasted like a star  
Fronting the dawn he moved: a leopard skin

Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny hair

Cluster'd about his temples like a God's;

And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-bow brightens

When the wind blows the foam, and all my heart

Went forth to embrace him coming ere he came.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
He smiled, and opening out his milk-white palm

Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold.

That smelt ambrosially, and while I look'd

And listen'd, the full-flowing river of speech

Came down upon my heart.

"My own Ænone,  
Beautiful-brow'd Ænone, my own soul,

Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind ingrav'n

"For the most fair," would seem to award it thine,

As lovelier than whatever Oreid haunt  
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all

Of movement, and the charm of married brows.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,

And added, 'This was cast upon the board,

When all the full-faced presence of the Gods

Ranged in the halls of Peleus; where-upon

Rose feud, with question unto whom 'twere due:

But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,

Delivering, that to me, by common voice

Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,  
Pallas and Aphrodite, claiming each

This meed of fairest. Thou, within the cave

Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,

Mayst well behold them, unbeheld, unheard

Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods.'

"Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.  
It was the deep midnight; one silvery cloud

Had lost his way between the piney sides

Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came,

Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,

And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,

Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,  
Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose,

And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,

This way and that, in many a wild festoon  
 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs  
 With bunch and berry and flower thro' and thro'.

"O mother Ida, hearken ere I die.  
 On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,  
 And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud,  
 and lean'd  
 Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew,  
 Then first I heard the voice of her, to whom  
 Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that grows  
 Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods  
 Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made  
 Proffer of royal power, ample rule  
 Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue  
 Wherewith to embellish state, 'from many a vale  
 And river-sunder'd champaign clothed with corn,  
 Or labor'd mines undrainable of ore.  
 Honor,' she said, 'and homage, tax and toll,  
 From many an inland town and haven large,  
 Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing citadel.  
 In glassy bays among her tallest towers.'

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Still she spake on and still she spake of power,  
 'Which in all action is the end of all ;  
 Power fitted to the season ; wisdom-bred  
 And throned of wisdom—from all neighbor crowns  
 Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand  
 Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon from me,  
 From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to thee king-born,  
 A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,  
 Should come most welcome, seeing men, in power,  
 Only, are likest gods, who have attain'd

Rest in a happy place and quiet seats  
 Above the thunder, with undying bliss  
 In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit  
 Out at arm's-length, so much the thought of power  
 Flatter'd his spirit ; but Pallas where she stood  
 Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs  
 O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed spear

Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,  
 The while, above, her full and earnest eye  
 Over her snow-cold breast and angry cheek  
 Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply.

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,  
 These three alone lead life to sovereign power.  
 Yet not for power, (power of herself  
 Would come uncall'd for) but to live by law,  
 Acting the law we live by without fear ;  
 And, because right is right, to follow right  
 Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Again she said : 'I woo thee not with gifts.  
 Sequel of guerdon could not alter me  
 To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,  
 So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,  
 If gazing on divinity disrobed  
 Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,  
 Unbiass'd by self-profit, oh ! rest thee sure  
 That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee,  
 So that my vigor, wedded to thy blood,  
 Shall strike within thy pulses, like a God's,  
 To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks,  
 Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow  
 Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown will,  
 Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,  
 Commensure perfect freedom.'

"Here she ceased  
 And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, 'O Paris,  
 Give it to Pallas,' but he heard me not,  
 Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me !

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,  
 Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells,  
 With rosy slender fingers backward drew  
 From her warm brows and bosom her deep hair  
 Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat  
 And shoulder : from the violets her light foot  
 Shone rosy-white, and o'er her round ed form

Between the shadows of the vine-  
bunches  
Floated the glowing sunlights, as she  
moved.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
She with a subtle smile in her mild  
eyes,  
The herald of her triumph, drawing  
nigh  
Half-whisper'd in his ear, 'I promise  
thee  
The fairest and most loving wife in  
Greece.'  
She spoke and laugh'd: I shut my  
sight for fear:  
But when I look'd, Paris had raised  
his arm  
And I beheld great Herë's angry eyes,  
As she withdrew into the golden cloud,  
And I was left alone within the bower;  
And from that time to this I am alone,  
And I shall be alone until I die.

"Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Fairest — why fairest wife? am I not  
fair?  
My love hath told me so a thousand  
times.  
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,  
When I past by, a wild and wanton  
pard,  
Eyed like the evening star, with play-  
ful tail  
Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most  
loving is she?  
Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that  
my arms  
Were wound about thee, and my hot  
lips prest  
Close, close to thine in that quick-fall-  
ing dew  
Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn  
rains  
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
They came, they cut away my tallest  
pines,  
My dark tall pines, that plumed the  
craggy ledge.  
High over the blue gorge, and all be-  
tween  
The snowy peak and snow-white cata-  
ract  
Foster'd the callow eaglet — from be-  
neath  
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the  
dark morn  
The panther's roar came muffled, while  
I sat  
Low in the valley. Never, never more  
Shall lone Ænone see the morning  
mist  
Sweep thro' them; never see them  
overlaid  
With narrow moon-lit slips of silver  
cloud,  
Between the loud stream and the trem-  
bling stars.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
I wish that somewhere in the ruin'd  
folds,  
Among the fragments tumbled from  
the glens,  
Or the dry thickets, I could meet with  
her,  
The Abominable, that uninvited came  
Into the fair Peleïan banquet-hall,  
And cast the golden fruit upon the  
board,  
And bred this change; that I might  
speak my mind,  
And tell her to her face how much I  
hate  
Her presence, hated both of Gods and  
men.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand  
times,  
In this green valley, under this green  
hill,  
Ev'n on this hand, and sitting on this  
stone?  
Seal'd it with kisses? water'd it with  
tears?  
O happy tears, and how unlike to  
these!  
O happy Heaven, how canst thou see  
my face?  
O happy earth, how canst thou bear my  
weight?  
O death, death, death, thou ever float-  
ing cloud,  
There are enough unhappy on this  
earth,  
Pass by the happy souls, that love to  
live:  
I pray thee, pass before my light of  
life,  
And shadow all my soul, that I may  
die.  
Thou weighest heavy on the heart  
within,  
Weigh heavy on my eyelids: let me  
die.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts  
Do shape themselves within me, more  
and more,  
Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear  
Dead sounds at night come from the  
inmost hills,  
Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see  
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a  
mother  
Conjectures of the features of her  
child  
Ere it is born: her child! — a shudder  
comes  
Across me: never child be born of me,  
Unblest, to vex me with his father's  
eyes!

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,  
Lest their shrill happy laughter come  
to me  
Walking the cold and starless road of  
Death

Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love  
 With the Greek woman. I will rise  
 and go  
 Down into Troy, and ere the stars  
 come forth  
 Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she  
 says  
 A fire dances before her, and a sound  
 Rings ever in her ears of armed men.  
 What this may be I know not, but I  
 know  
 That, wheresoe'er I am by night and  
 day,  
 All earth and air seem only burning  
 fire."

### THE SISTERS.

WE were two daughters of one race:  
 She was the fairest in the face:  
 The wind is blowing in turret and  
 tree.  
 They were together, and she fell:  
 Therefore revenge became me well.  
 O the Earl was fair to see!  
 She died: she went to burning flame:  
 She mix'd her ancient blood with  
 shame.  
 The wind is howling in turret and  
 tree.  
 Whole weeks and months, and early  
 and late,  
 To win his love I lay in wait:  
 O the Earl was fair to see!  
 I made a feast; I bade him come;  
 I won his love, I brought him home.  
 The wind is roaring in turret and  
 tree.  
 And after supper, on a bed,  
 Upon my lap he laid his head:  
 O the Earl was fair to see!  
 I kiss'd his eyelids into rest:  
 His ruddy cheek upon my breast.  
 The wind is raging in turret and  
 tree.  
 I hated him with the hate of hell,  
 But I loved his beauty passing well.  
 O the Earl was fair to see!  
 I rose up in the silent night:  
 I made my dagger sharp and bright.  
 The wind is raving in turret and  
 tree.  
 As half-asleep his breath he drew,  
 Three times I stabb'd him thro' and  
 thro'.  
 O the Earl was fair to see!  
 I curl'd and comb'd his comely head,  
 He look'd so grand when he was dead.  
 The wind is blowing in turret and  
 tree.  
 I wrapt his body in the sheet,  
 And laid him at his mother's feet.  
 O the Earl was fair to see!

### TO

#### WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

I SEND you here a sort of allegory,  
 (For you will understand it) of a soul,

A sinful soul possess'd of many gifts,  
 A spacious garden full of flowering  
 weeds,  
 A glorious Devil, large in heart and  
 brain,  
 That did love Beauty only, (Beauty  
 seen  
 In all varieties of mould and mind)  
 And Knowledge for its beauty; or if  
 Good,  
 Good only for its beauty, seeing not  
 That Beauty, Good, and Knowledge,  
 are three sisters  
 That doat upon each other, friends to  
 man,  
 Living together under the same roof,  
 And never can be sunder'd without  
 tears.  
 And he that shuts Love out, in turn  
 shall be  
 Shut out from Love, and on her thresh-  
 old lie  
 Howling in outer darkness. Not for  
 this  
 Was common clay ta'en from the com-  
 mon earth,  
 Moulded by God, and temper'd with  
 the tears  
 Of angels to the perfect shape of man.

### THE PALACE OF ART.

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-  
 house,  
 Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.  
 I said, "O Soul, make merry and ca-  
 rouse,  
 Dear soul, for all is well."  
 A huge crag-platform, smooth as burn-  
 ish'd brass,  
 I chose. The ranged ramparts bright  
 From level meadow-bates of deep grass  
 Suddenly scaled the light,  
 Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or  
 shelf  
 The rock rose clear, or winding stair.  
 My soul would live alone unto herself  
 In her high palace there.  
 And "while the world runs round and  
 round," I said,  
 "Reign thou apart, a quiet king,  
 Still as, while Saturn whirls, his sted-  
 fast shade  
 Sleeps on his luminous ring."  
 To which my soul made answer read-  
 ily:  
 "Trust me, in bliss I shall abide  
 In this great mansion, that is built for  
 me,  
 So royal-rich and wide."  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 Four courts I made, East, West and  
 South and North,  
 In each a squared lawn, wherefrom  
 The golden gorge of dragons spouted  
 forth  
 A flood of fountain foam.

And round the cool green courts there  
 ran a row  
 Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty  
 woods,  
 Echoing all night to that sonorous  
 flow  
 Of spouted fountain-floods.

And round the roofs a gilded gallery  
 That lent broad verge to distant  
 lands,  
 Far as the wild swan wings, to where  
 the sky  
 Dipt down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in  
 one swell  
 Across the mountain stream'd below  
 In misty folds, that floating as they  
 fell  
 Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue seem'd  
 To hang on tiptoe, tossing up  
 A cloud of incense of all odor steam'd  
 From out a golden cup.  
 So that she thought, "And who shall  
 gaze upon  
 My palace with unblinded eyes,  
 While this great bow will waver in the  
 sun,  
 And that sweet incense rise?"

For that sweet incense rose and never  
 fail'd,  
 And, while day sank or mounted  
 higher,  
 The light aerial gallery, golden-rail'd,  
 Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd  
 and traced,  
 Would seem slow-flaming crimson  
 fires  
 From shadow'd grots of arches inter-  
 laced,  
 And tipt with frost-like spires.

\* \* \* \*

Full of long-sounding corridors it was,  
 That over-vaulted grateful gloom,  
 Thro' which the livelong day my soul  
 did pass,  
 Well-pleased, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the pal-  
 ace stood,  
 All various, each a perfect whole  
 From living Nature, fit for every mood  
 And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green  
 and blue,  
 Showing a gaudy summer-morn.  
 Where with puff'd cheek the belted  
 hunter blew  
 His wreathed bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red—a tract of  
 sand,  
 And some one pacing there alone,  
 Who paced for ever in a glimmering  
 land,  
 Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry  
 waves.  
 You seem'd to hear them climb and  
 fall  
 And roar rock-thwarted under bellow-  
 ing caves,  
 Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow  
 By herds upon an endless plain,  
 The ragged rims of thunder brooding  
 low,  
 With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry  
 toil.  
 In front they bound the sheaves.  
 Behind  
 Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil  
 And hoary to the wind.

And one, a foreground black with  
 stones and slags,  
 Beyond, a line of heights, and higher  
 All barr'd with long white cloud the  
 scornful crags,  
 And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home—gray twi-  
 light pour'd  
 On dewy pastures, dewy trees,  
 Softer than sleep—all things in order  
 stored,  
 A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape  
 fair  
 As fit for every mood of mind,  
 Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was  
 there  
 Not less than truth design'd.

\* \* \* \*

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,  
 In tracts of pasture sunny warm,  
 Beneath branch-work of costly sar-  
 donyx  
 Smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-wall'd city on the sea,  
 Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair  
 Wound with white roses, slept St.  
 Cecily:  
 An angel look'd at her.

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise,  
 A group of Houris bow'd to see  
 The dying Islamite, with hands and  
 eyes  
 That said, We wait for thee.

Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son  
 In some fair space of sloping greens  
 Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,  
 And watch'd by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,  
 To list a foot-fall, ere he saw  
 The wood-nymph, stay'd the Ausonian  
 king to hear  
 Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrail'd,  
 And many a tract of palm and rice,  
 The throne of Indian Cama slowly  
 sail'd  
 A summer fann'd with spice,

Or sweet Europa's mantle blew un-  
clasp'd,  
From off her shoulder backward  
borne :

From one hand droop'd a crocus : one  
hand grasp'd  
The mild bull's golden horn.

Or else flushed Ganymede, his rosy  
thigh

Half-buried in the Eagle's down,  
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky  
Above the pillar'd town.

Nor these alone : but every legend fair  
Which the supreme Caucasian mind  
Carved out of Nature for itself, was  
there,  
Not less than life, design'd.

\* \* \* \*

Then in the towers I placed great bells  
that swung,  
Moved of themselves, with silver  
sound :

And with choice paintings of wise men  
I hung  
The royal dais round.

For there was Milton like a seraph  
strong,  
Beside him Shakespeare bland and  
mild ;

And there the world-worn Dante  
grasp'd his song,  
And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father of the rest ;  
A million wrinkles carved his skin,  
A hundred winters snow'd upon his  
breast

From cheek and throat and chin.

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set  
Many an arch high up did lift,  
And angels rising and descending met  
With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choicely plann'd  
With cycles of the human tale  
Of this wide world, the times of every  
land

So wrought, they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,  
Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads  
and stings ;

Here play'd, a tiger, rolling to and fro  
The heads and crowns of kings ;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break  
or bind

All force in bonds that might endure,  
And here once more like some sick  
man declined,  
And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod : and those  
great bells

Began to chime. She took her throne :  
She sat betwixt the shining Oriels,  
To sing her songs alone.

And thro' the topmost Oriels' colored  
flame

Two godlike faces gazed below ;  
Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Ver-  
ulam,  
The first of those who know.

And all those names, that in their  
motion were

Full-welling fountain-heads of change,  
Betwixt the slender shafts were blaz-  
on'd fair

In diverse raiment strange :

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber,  
emerald, blue,

Flush'd in her temples and her eyes,  
And from her lips, as morn from Mem-  
non, drew

Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong  
Her low preamble all alone,

More than my soul to hear her echo'd  
song

Throb thro' the ribbed stone ;

Singing and murmuring in her feastful  
mirth,

Joying to feel herself alive,  
Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible  
earth,

Lord of the senses five ;

Communing with herself : " All these  
are mine,

And let the world have peace or wars,  
'T is one to me." She—when young  
night divine

Crown'd dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious  
toils—

Lit light in wreaths and anadems,  
And pure quintessences of precious oils  
In hollow'd moons of gems,

To mimic heaven ; and clapt her hands  
and cried,

" I marvel if my still delight

In this great house so royal-rich, and  
wide,

Be flatter'd to the height.

" O all things fair to sate my various  
eyes !

O shapes and hues that please me  
well !

O silent faces of the Great and Wise,  
My Gods, with whom I dwell !

" O God-like isolation which art mine,  
I can but count thee perfect gain,

What time I watch the darkening  
droves of swine

That range on yonder plain.

In filthy sloughs they roll a prurient  
skin,

They graze and wallow, breed and  
sleep ;

And oft some brainless devil enters in,  
And drives them to the deep."

Then of the moral instinct would she  
prate,

And of the rising from the dead,

As hers by right of full-accomplish'd  
Fate ;  
And at the last she said :

"I take possession of man's mind and  
deed.

I care not what the sects may brawl,  
I sit as God holding no form of creed,  
But contemplating all."

\* \* \* \*

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth  
Flash'd thro' her as she sat alone,  
Yet not the less held she her solemn  
mirth,  
And intellectual throne.

And so she throve and prosper'd : so  
three years

She prosper'd : on the fourth she fell  
Like Herod, when the shout was in his  
ears,

Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,  
God, before whom ever lie bare  
The abysmal deeps of Personality,  
Plagued her with sere despair.

When she would think, where'er she  
turn'd her sight,

The airy hand confusion wrought,  
Wrote "Mene, mene," and divided  
quite

The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her soli-  
tude

Fell on her, from which mood was  
born

Scorn of herself ; again, from out that  
mood

Laughter at her self-scorn.

"What ! is not this my place of  
strength ?" she said.

"My spacious mansion built for me,  
Whereof the strong foundation-stones  
were laid

Since my first memory ?"

But in dark corners of her palace stood  
Uncertain shapes : and unawares

On white-eyed phantasms weeping  
tears of blood,

And horrible nightmares.

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of  
flame,

And, with dim fretted foreheads all,  
On corpses three-months-old at noon  
she came,

That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without  
light

Or power of movement, seem'd my  
soul,

Mid onward-sloping motions infinite  
Making for one sure goal.

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of  
sand ;

Left on the shore ; that hears all  
night

The plunging seas draw backward from  
the land

Their moon-led waters white.

A star that with the choral starry dance  
Join'd not, but stood, and standing  
saw

The hollow orb of moving Circumstance  
Roll'd round by one fix'd law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had  
curl'd.

"No voice," she shriek'd in that lone  
hall,

"No voice breaks thro' the stillness of  
this world :

One deep, deep silence all !"

She, mouldering with the dull earth's  
mouldering sod,

Inwraught tenfold in slothful shame.

Lay there exiled from eternal God,  
Lost to her place and name ;

And death and life she hated equally,  
And nothing saw, for her despair,

But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,  
No comfort anywhere.

Remaining utterly confused with fears,  
And ever worse with growing time,

And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,  
And all alone in crime :

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt  
round

With blackness as a solid wall,  
Far off she seem'd to hear the dully

sound

Of human footsteps fall.

As in strange lands a traveller walking  
slow,

In doubt and great perplexity,  
A little before moon-rise hears the low

Moan of an unknown sea ;

And knows not if it be thunder or  
a sound

Of rocks thrown down, or one deep  
cry

Of great wild beasts ; then thinketh,  
"I have found

A new land, but I die."

She howl'd aloud, "I am on fire within.  
There comes no murmur of reply.

What is it that will take away my sin,  
And save me lest I die ?"

So when four years were wholly fin-  
ished,

She threw her royal robes away.  
"Make me a cottage in the vale," she

said,

"Where I may mourn and pray."

"Yet pull not down my palace towers,  
that are

So lightly, beautifully built :

Perchance I may return with others  
there

When I have purged my guilt."

## LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE.

LADY Clara Vere de Vere,  
Of me you shall not win renown :  
You thought to break a country heart  
For pastime, ere you went to town.  
At me you smiled, but unbeguiled  
I saw the snare, and I retired :  
The daughter of a hundred Earls,  
You are not one to be desired.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
I know you proud to bear your name,  
Your pride is yet no mate for mine,  
Too proud to care from whence I came.

Nor would I break for your sweet sake  
A heart that doats on truer charms.  
A simple maiden in her flower  
Is worth a hundred coats-of-arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
Some meeker pupil you must find,  
For were you queen of all that is,  
I could not stoop to such a mind.  
You sought to prove how I could love,  
And my disdain is my reply.  
The lion on your old stone gates  
Is not more cold to you than I.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
You put strange memories in my head.  
Not thrice your branching limes have blown  
Since I beheld young Laurence dead.  
O, your sweet eyes, your low replies :  
A great enchantress you may be ;  
But there was that across his throat  
Which you had hardly cared to see.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
When thus he met his mother's view,  
She had the passions of her kind,  
She spake some certain truths of you.  
Indeed I heard one bitter word  
That scarce is fit for you to hear ;  
Her manners had not that repose  
Which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
There stands a spectre in your hall :  
The guilt of blood is at your door :  
You changed a wholesome heart to gail.

You held your course without remorse.  
To make him trust his modest worth,  
And, last, you fix'd a vacant stare,  
And slew him with your noble birth.

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,  
From yon blue heavens above us bent,  
The gardener Adam and his wife  
Smile at the claims of long descent.  
How'er it be, it seems to me,  
'Tis only noble to be good.

Kind hearts are more than coronets,  
And simple faith than Norman blood.  
I know you, Clara Vere de Vere,  
You pine among your halls and towers :

The languid light of your proud eyes

Is wearied of the rolling hours.  
In glowing health, with boundless wealth,

But sickening of a vague disease,  
You know so ill to deal with time,  
You needs must play such pranks as these.

Clara, Clara Vere de Vere,  
If Time be heavy on your hands,  
Are there no beggars at your gate,  
Nor any poor about your lands ?  
Oh ! teach the orphan-boy to read,  
Or teach the orphan-girl to sew,  
Pray Heaven for a human heart,  
And let the foolish yeoman go.

## THE MAY QUEEN.

You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear,  
To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year ;  
Of all the glad New-year, mother, the maddest, merriest day ;  
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

There's many a black, black eye, they say, but none so bright as mine ;  
There's Margaret and Mary, there's Kate and Caroline :  
But none so fair as little Alice in all the land they say,  
So I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

I sleep so sound all night, mother, that I shall never wake,  
If you do not call me loud when the day begins to break :  
But I must gather knots of flowers, and buds and garlands gay,  
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

As I came up the valley whom think ye should I see,  
But Robin leaning on the bridge beneath the hazel-tree ?  
He thought of that sharp look, mother, I gave him yesterday,—  
But I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

He thought I was a ghost, mother, for I was all in white,  
And I ran by him without speaking, like a flash of light.  
They call me cruel-hearted, but I care not what they say,  
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

They say he's dying all for love, but that can never be :  
They say his heart is breaking, mother, —what is that to me ?  
There's many a bolder lad 'ill woo me any summer day,  
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

Little Effie shall go with me to-morrow  
to the green,  
And you'll be there, too, mother, to see  
me made the Queen:  
For the shepherd lads on every side 'ill  
come from far away,  
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The honeysuckle round the porch has  
wov'n its wavy bowe s,  
And by the meadow-trenches blow the  
faint sweet cuckoo-flowers;  
And the wild marsh-marigold shines  
like fire in swamps and hollows  
gray,

And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The night-winds come and go, mother,  
upon the meadow grass;  
And the happy stars above them seem  
to brighten as they pass,

There will not be a drop of rain the  
whole of the livelong day.

And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

All the valley, mother, 'ill be fresh and  
green and still,

And the cowslip and the crowfoot are  
over all the hill,

And the rivulet in the flowery dale 'ill  
merrily glance and play,

For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

So you must wake and call me early,  
call me early, mother dear,

To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of  
all the glad New-year:

To-morrow 'ill be of all the year the  
maddest merriest day,

For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

#### NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

If you're waking call me early, call me  
early, mother dear.

For I would see the sun rise upon the  
glad New-year.

It is the last New-year that I shall ever  
see,

Then you may lay me low i' the mould  
and think no more of me.

To-night I saw the sun set: he set and  
left behind

The good old year, the dear old time,  
and all my peace of mind;

And the New-year's coming up, mother,  
but I shall never see

The blossom on the blackthorn, the  
leaf upon the tree.

Last May we made a crown of flowers;  
we had a merry day;

Beneath the hawthorn on the green  
they made me Queen of May:

And we danced about the may-pole  
and in the hazel copse,

Till Charles's Wain came out above the  
tall white chimney tops.

There's not a flower on all the hills:  
the frost is on the pane:

I only wish to live till the snowdrops  
come again:

I wish the snow would melt and the  
sun come out on high:

I long to see a flower so before the day  
I die.

The building rook 'ill caw from the  
windy tall elm-tree,

And the tufted plover pipe along the  
fallow lea,

And the swallow 'ill come back again  
with summer o'er the wave,

But I shall lie alone, mother, within  
the mouldering grave.

Upon the chancel-casement, and upon  
that grave of mine,

In the early early morning the summer  
sun 'ill shine,

Before the red cock crows from the  
farm upon the hill,

When you are warm-asleep, mother,  
and all the world is still.

When the flowers come again, mother,  
beneath the waning light,

You'll never see me more in the long  
gray fields at night;

When from the dry dark wold the  
summer airs blow cool

On the oat-grass and the sword-grass,  
and the bulrush in the pool.

You'll bury me, my mother, just  
beneath the hawthorn shade,

And you'll come sometimes and see me  
where I am lowly laid.

I shall not forget you, mother, I shall  
hear you when you pass,

With your feet above my head in the  
long and pleasant grass.

I have been wild and wayward, but  
you'll forgive me now;

You'll kiss me, my own mother, and  
forgive me ere I go;

Nay, nay, you must not weep, nor let  
your grief be wild,

You should not fret for me, mother,  
you have another child.

If I can I'll come again, mother, from  
out my resting-place;

Tho' you'll not see me, mother, I shall  
look upon your face;

Tho' I cannot speak a word, I shall  
harken what you say,

And be often, often with you when  
you think I'm far away.

Good-night, good-night, when I have  
said good-night for ever more,

And you see me carried out from the  
threshold of the door;

Don't let Effie come to see me till my  
grave be growing green:

She'll be a better child to you than  
ever I have been.

She'll find my garden-tools upon the granary floor :

Let her take 'em : they are hers : I shall never garden more :

But tell her, when I'm gone, to train the rose-bush that I set

About the parlor-window and the box of mignonette.

Good-night, sweet mother : call me before the day is born.

All night I lie awake, but I fall asleep at morn ;

But I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year,

So, if you're waking, call me, call me early, mother dear.

### CONCLUSION.

I THOUGHT to pass away before, and yet alive I am ;

And in the fields all round I hear the bleating of the lamb.

How sadly, I remember, rose the morning of the year !

To die before the snowdrop came, and now the violet's here.

O sweet is the new violet, that comes beneath the skies,

And sweeter is the young lamb's voice to me that cannot rise,

And sweet is all the land about, and all the flowers that blow,

And sweeter far is death than life to me that long to go.

It seem'd so hard at first, mother, to leave the blessed sun,

And now it seems as hard to stay, and yet His will be done !

But still I think it can't be long before I find release,

And that good man, the clergyman, has told me words of peace.

O blessings on his kindly voice and on his silver hair !

And blessings on his whole life long, until he meet me there !

O blessings on his kindly heart and on his silver head !

A thousand times I blest him, as he knelt beside my bed.

He taught me all the mercy, for he show'd me all the sin.

Now, tho' my lamp was lighted late, there's One will let me in :

Nor would I now be well, mother, again, if that could be,

For my desire is but to pass to Him that died for me.

I did not hear the dog howl, mother, or the death-watch beat,

There came a sweeter token when the night and morning meet :

But sit beside my bed, mother, and put your hand in mine,

And Effie on the other side, and I will tell the sign.

All in the wild March-morning I heard the angels call,

It was when the moon was setting, and the dark was over all ;

The trees began to whisper, and the wind began to roll,

And in the wild March-morning I heard them call my soul.

For lying broad awake I thought of you and Effie dear ;

I saw you sitting in the house, and I no longer here ;

With all my strength I pray'd for both and so I felt resign'd

And up the valley came a swell of music on the wind.

I thought that it was fancy, and I listen'd in my bed,

And then did something speak to me—I know not what was said ;

For great delight and shuddering took hold of all my mind,

And up the valley came again the music on the wind.

But you were sleeping and I said, " It's not for them : it's mine."

And if it comes three times, I thought, I take it for a sign.

And once again it came, and close beside the window-bars,

Then seem'd to go right up to Heaven and die among the stars.

So now I think my time is near. I trust it is. I know

The blessed music went that way my soul will have to go.

And for myself, indeed, I care not if I go to-day.

But, Effie, you must comfort *her* when I am past away.

And say to Robin a kind word, and tell him not to fret ;

There's many a worthier than I, would make him happy yet.

If I had lived—I cannot tell—I might have been his wife ;

But all these things have ceased to be, with my desire of life.

O look ! the sun begins to rise, the heavens are in a glow ;

He shines upon a hundred fields, and all of them I know.

And there I move no longer now, and there his light may shine—

Wild flowers in the valley for other hands than mine.

O sweet and strange it seems to me, that ere this day is done.

The voice, that now is speaking, may be beyond the sun—

For ever and for ever with those just souls and true—

And what is life, that we should moan ? why make we such ado ?

For ever and for ever, all in a blessed home—

And there to wait a little while till you  
and Effie come—  
To lie within the light of God, as I lie  
upon your breast—  
And the wicked cease from troubling,  
and the weary are at rest.

## THE LOTOSEATERS.

"COURAGE! he said, and pointed to-  
ward the land,  
"This mounting wave will roll us  
shoreward soon."  
In the afternoon they came unto a land,  
In which it seemed always afternoon.  
All round the coast the languid air did  
swoon,  
Breathing like one that hath a weary  
dream.  
Full-faced above the valley stood the  
moon;  
And like a downward smoke, the slen-  
der stream  
Along the cliff to fall and pause and  
fall did seem.

A land of streams! some like a down-  
ward smoke.

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn,  
did go;

And some thro' wavering lights and  
shadows broke,

Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam  
below.

They saw the gleaming river seaward  
flow

From the inner land: far off, three  
mountain-tops,

Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,  
Stood sunset-flash'd: and, dew'd with

showery drops,  
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the

woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown  
In the red West: thro' mountain clefts

the dale  
Was seen far inland, and the yellow

down  
Border'd with palm, and many a wind-  
ing vale

And meadow, set with slender galin-  
gale;

A land where all things always seem'd  
the same!

And round about the keel with faces  
pale,

Dark faces pale against that rosy  
flame,

The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eat-  
ers came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted  
stem,

Laden with flower and fruit, whereof  
they gave

To each, but whoso did receive of them,  
And taste, to him the gushing of the

wave  
Far far away did seem to mourn and

rave,

On alien shores; and if his fellow  
spake,

His voice was thin, as voices from the  
grave;

And deep-asleep he seem'd yet all  
awake,

And music in his ears his beating  
heart did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow  
sand

Between the sun and moon upon the  
shore;

And sweet it was to dream of Father  
land,

Of child, and wife, and slave: but  
evermore

Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the  
oar,

Weary the wandering fields of barren  
foam.

Then some one said, "We will return  
no more;"

And all at once they sang, "Our island  
home

Is far beyond the wave; we will no  
longer roam."

## CHORIC SONG.

I.

THERE is sweet music here that softer  
falls

Than petals from blown roses on the  
grass,

Or night-dews on still waters between  
walls

Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming  
pass;

Music that gentler on the spirit lies,  
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes;

Music that brings sweet sleep down  
from the blissful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,  
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,

And in the stream the long-leaved  
flowers weep,

And from the craggy ledge the poppy  
hangs in sleep.

II.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heavi-  
ness,

And utterly consumed with sharp dis-  
tress,

While all things else have rest from  
weariness?

All things have rest: why should we  
toil alone,

We only toil, who are the first of  
things,

And make perpetual moan,  
Still from one sorrow to another

thrown;

Nor ever fold our wings,  
And cease from wanderings,

Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy  
balm;

Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,  
"There is no joy but calm!"

Why should we only toil, the roof and  
crown of things?

## III.

Lo! in the middle of the wood,  
 The folded leaf is woo'd from out the  
 bud  
 With winds upon the branch, and there  
 Grows green and broad, and takes no  
 care,  
 Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon  
 Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow  
 Falls, and floats adown the air.  
 Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,  
 The full-juiced apple, waxing over-  
 mellow,  
 Drops in a silent autumn night.  
 All its allotted length of days,  
 The flower ripens in its place,  
 Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath  
 no toil,  
 Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

## IV.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,  
 Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.  
 Death is the end of life; ah, why  
 Should life all labor be?  
 Let us alone. Time driveth onward  
 fast,  
 And in a little while our lips are dumb,  
 Let us alone. What is it that will last?  
 All things are taken from us, and be-  
 come  
 Portions and parcels of the dreadful  
 Past.  
 Let us alone. What pleasure can we  
 have  
 To war with evil? Is there any peace  
 In ever climbing up the climbing  
 wave?  
 All things have rest, and ripen toward  
 the grave  
 In silence; ripen, fall and cease;  
 Give us long rest or death, dark death,  
 or dreamful ease.

## V.

How sweet it were, hearing the down-  
 ward stream,  
 With half-shut eyes ever to seem  
 Falling asleep in a half dream!  
 To dream and dream, like yonder am-  
 ber light,  
 Which will not leave the myrrh-bush  
 on the height;  
 To hear each other's whisper'd speech;  
 Eating the Lotos day by day,  
 To watch the crisping ripples on the  
 beach,  
 And tender curving lines of creamy  
 spray;  
 To lend our hearts and spirits wholly  
 To the influence of mild-minded melan-  
 choly;  
 To muse and brood and live again in  
 memory,  
 With those old faces of our infancy  
 Heap'd over with a mound of grass,  
 Two handfuls of white dust, shut in  
 an urn of brass!

## VI.

Dear is the memory of our wedded  
 lives,

And dear the last embraces of our  
 wives  
 And their warm tears; but all hath  
 suffer'd change,  
 For surely now our household hearths  
 are cold:  
 Our sons inherit us: our looks are  
 strange;  
 And we should come like ghosts to  
 trouble joy.  
 Or else the island princes over-bold  
 Have eat our substance, and the min-  
 strel sings  
 Before them of the ten years' war in  
 Troy,  
 And our great deeds, as half-forgotten  
 things,  
 Is there confusion in the little isle?  
 Let what is broken so remain.  
 The Gods are hard to reconcile:  
 'Tis hard to settle order once again.  
 There is confusion worse than death,  
 Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,  
 Long labor unto aged breath,  
 Sore task to hearts worn out with many  
 wars  
 And eyes grown dim with gazing on  
 the pilot-stars.

## VII.

But, propt on beds of amaranth and  
 moly,  
 How sweet (while warm airs lull us,  
 blowing lowly)  
 With half-dropt eyelids still,  
 Beneath a heaven dark and holy,  
 To watch the long bright river draw-  
 ing slowly  
 His waters from the purple hill —  
 To hear the dewy echoes calling  
 From cave to cave thro' the thick-  
 twined vine —  
 To watch the emerald-color'd water  
 falling  
 Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath  
 divine!  
 Only to hear and see the far-off spark-  
 ling brine,  
 Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out  
 beneath the pine.

## VIII.

The Lotos blooms below the barren  
 peak:  
 The Lotos blows by every winding  
 creek:  
 All day the wind breathes low with  
 mellower tone:  
 Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone  
 Round and round the spicy downs the  
 yellow Lotos-dust is blown.  
 We have had enough of action, and of  
 motion we,  
 Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard,  
 when the surge was seething free,  
 Where the wallowing monster spouted  
 his foam-fountains in the sea.  
 Let us swear an oath, and keep it with  
 an equal mind,  
 In the hollow Lotos-land to live and  
 lie reclined

On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.  
 For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurl'd  
 Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly curl'd  
 Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming world:  
 Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,  
 Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps and fiery sands,  
 Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and praying hands.  
 But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful song  
 Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,  
 Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are strong,  
 Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the soil,  
 Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,  
 Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and oil;  
 Till they perish and they suffer—some 'tis whisper'd—down in hell  
 Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,  
 Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.  
 Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore  
 Than labor in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar;  
 O rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

## A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

I READ, before my eyelids dropt their shade,  
 "The Legend of Good Women," long ago  
 Sung by the morning star of song, who made  
 His music heard below;  
 Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose sweet breath  
 Preluded those melodious bursts, that fill  
 The spacious times of great Elizabeth  
 With sounds that echo still.  
 And, for a while, the knowledge of his art  
 Held me above the subject, as strong gales  
 Hold swollen clouds from raining, tho' my heart,  
 Brimful of those wild tales,  
 Charged both mine eyes with tears. In every land  
 I saw, wherever light illumineth,  
 Beauty and anguish walking hand in hand  
 The downward slope to death.

Those far-renowned brides of ancient song  
 Peopled the hollow dark, like burning stars,  
 And I heard sounds of insult, shame, and wrong,  
 And trumpets blown for wars;  
 And clattering flints batter'd with clanging hoofs:  
 And I saw crowds in column'd sanctuaries;  
 And forms that pass'd at windows and on roofs  
 Of marble palaces;  
 Corpses across the threshold; heroes tall  
 Dislodging pinnacle and parapet  
 Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall;  
 Lances in ambush set;  
 And high shrine-doors burst thro' with heated blasts  
 That run before the fluttering tongues of fire;  
 White surf wind-scatter'd over sails and masts,  
 And ever climbing higher;  
 Squadrons and squares of men in brazen plates;  
 Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers woes,  
 Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron grates,  
 And hush'd seraglios.  
 So shape chased shape as swift as, when to land  
 Bluster the winds and tides the self-same way,  
 Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level sand,  
 Torn from the fringe of spray.  
 I started once, or seem'd to start in pain,  
 Resolved on noble things, and strove to speak,  
 As when a great thought strikes along the brain,  
 And flushes all the cheek.  
 And once my arm was lifted to hew down  
 A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,  
 That bore a lady from a leaguer'd town;  
 And then, I know not how,  
 All those sharp fancies, by down-lapsing thought  
 Stream'd onward, lost their edges, and creep  
 Roll'd on each o'er, rounded, smooth'd, and brought  
 Into the gulfs of sleep.  
 At last methought that I had wander'd far  
 In an old wood: fresh-wash'd in coolest dew,  
 The maiden splendors of the morning star  
 Shook in the stedfast blue.

Enormous elmtree-boles did stoop and lean  
 Upon the dusky brushwood underneath  
 Their broad curved branches, fledged  
 with clearest green,  
 New from its silken sheath.

The dim red morn had died, her journey done,  
 And with dead lips smiled at the twilight plain,  
 Half-fall'n across the threshold of the sun,  
 Never to rise again.

There was no motion in the dumb dead air,  
 Not any song of bird or sound of rill;  
 Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre  
 Is not so deadly still.

As that wide forest. Growths of jasmine turn'd  
 Their humid arms festooning tree to tree,  
 And at the root thro' lush green grasses burn'd  
 The red anemone.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves,  
 I knew  
 The tearful glimmer of the languid dawn

On those long, rank, dark wood-walks  
 drench'd in dew,  
 Leading from lawn to lawn.

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,  
 Pour'd back into my empty soul and frame

The times when I remember to have been  
 Joyful and free from blame.

And from within me a clear undertone

Thrill'd thro' mine ears in that unblissful clime,

"Pass freely thro': the wood is all thine own,  
 Until the end of time."

At length I saw a lady within call,  
 Still than chiself'd marble, standing there;

A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,  
 And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with surprise

Froze my swift speech: she turning on my face

The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,  
 Spoke slowly in her place.

"I had great beauty: ask thou not my name:

No one can be more wise than destiny.

Many drew swords and died. Where'er I came

I brought calamity."

"No marvel, sovereign lady: in fair field.

Myself for such a face had boldly died,"

I answer'd free; and turning I appeal'd  
 To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and scornful looks averse,

To her full height her stately stature draws;

"My youth," she said, "was blasted with a curse:

This woman was the cause.

I was cut off from hope in that sad place,

Which yet to name my spirit loathes and fears:

My father held his hand upon his face;  
 I, blinded with my tears,

"Still strove to speak: my voice was thick with sighs

As in a dream. Dimly I could descry  
 The stern black-bearded kings with

wolfish eyes,

Waiting to see me die.

"The high masts flicker'd as they lay afloat;

The crowds, the temples, waver'd, and the shore;

The bright death quiver'd at the victim's throat,  
 Touched; and I knew no more."

Whereto the other with a downward brow:

"I would the white cold heavy-plunging foam,

Whirl'd by the wind, had roll'd me deep below,

Then when I left my home."

Her slow full words sank thro' the silence drear,

As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping sea;

Sudden I heard a voice that cried,  
 "Come here,

That I may look on thee."

I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,

One sitting on a crimson scarf unroll'd:

A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold black eyes,

Brow-bound with burning gold.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile, began:

"I govern'd men by change, and so I sway'd

All moods. 'Tis long since I have seen a man.

Once, like the moon, I made

"The ever-shifting currents of the blood

According to my humor ebb and flow.  
 I have no men to govern in this wood'

That makes my only woe.





"Nay—yet it chafes me that I could  
not bend  
One will; nor tame and tutor with  
mine eye  
That dull cold-blooded Cæsar. Pry-  
thee, friend,  
Where is Mark Antony?

"The man, my lover, with whom I rode  
sublime  
On fortune's neck; we sat as God by  
God:

The Nilus would have risen before his  
time  
And flooded at our nod.

"We drank the Libyan Sun to sleep,  
and lit  
Lamps which outburn'd Canopus.  
O my life

In Egypt! O the dalliance and the wit,  
The flattery and the strife,

And the wild kiss, when fresh from  
war's alarms,  
My Hercules, my Roman Antony,  
My mailed Bacchus leapt into my arms,  
Contented there to die!

And there he died: and when I heard  
my name  
Sigh'd forth with life I would not  
brook my fear

Of the other: with a worm I balk'd  
his fame.  
What else was left? look here!"

(With that she tore her robe apart, and  
half

The polish'd argent of her breast to  
sight  
Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with  
a laugh,  
Showing the aspick's bite.)

"I died a Queen. "The Roman soldier  
found

Me lying dead, my crown about my  
brows,

A name for ever!—lying robed and  
crown'd,  
Worthy a Roman spouse."

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest  
range

Struck by all passion, did fall down  
and glance

From tone to tone, and glided thro' all  
change

Of liveliest utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for  
delight;

Because with sudden motion from  
the ground

She raised her piercing orbs, and fill'd  
with light

The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tipt his keen-  
est darts:

As once they drew into two burning  
rings

All beams of Love, melting the mighty  
hearts  
Of captains and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I  
heard

A noise of some one coming thro' the  
lawn,  
And singing clearer than the crested  
bird,  
That claps his wings at dawn.

"The torrent brooks of hallow'd Israel  
From craggy hollows pouring, late  
and soon,  
Sound all night long, in falling thro'  
the dell,  
Far-heard beneath the moon.

"The balmy moon of blessed Israel  
Floods all the deep-blue gloom with  
beams divine:  
All night the splinter'd crags that wall  
the dell  
With spires of silver shine."

As one that museth where broad sun-  
shine laves  
The lawn by some cathedral, thro'  
the door  
Hearing the holy organ rolling waves  
Of sound on roof and floor

Within, and anthem sung, is charm'd  
and tied  
To where he stands,—so stood I,  
when that flow  
Of music left the lips of her that died  
To save her father's vow;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,  
A maiden pure; as when she went  
along  
From Mizpeh's tower'd gate with  
welcome light,  
With timbrel and with song.

My words leapt forth: "Heaven heads  
the count of crimes  
With that wild oath." She render'd  
answer high:

"Not so, nor once alone: a thousand  
times  
I would be born and die.

"Single I grew, like some green plant,  
whose root

Creeps to the garden water-pipes be-  
neath,

Feeding the flower; but ere my flower  
to fruit

Changed, I was ripe for death.

"My God, my land, my father—these  
did move

Me from my bliss of life, that Nature  
gave,

Lower'd softly with a threefold cord of  
love

Down to a silent grave.

"And I went mourning, 'No fair  
Hebrew boy

Shall smile away my maiden blame  
among  
The Hebrew mothers'—emptied of all  
joy,  
Leaving the dance and song.

"Leaving the olive-gardens far below,  
Leaving the promise of my bridal  
bower,  
The valleys of grape-loaded vines that  
glow  
Beneath the battled tower.

"The light white cloud swam over us,  
Anon

We heard the lion roaring from his  
den ;

We saw the large white stars rise one  
by one,

Or, from the darken'd glen,

"Saw God divide the night with flying  
flame,

And thunder on the everlasting hills.  
I heard Him, for He spake, and grief  
became

A solemn scorn of ills.

"When the next moon was roll'd into  
the sky,

Strength came to me that equall'd  
my desire.

How beautiful a thing it was to die  
For God and for my sire !

"It comforts me in this one thought  
to dwell,

That I subdued me to my father's  
will ;

Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell  
Sweetens the spirit still.

Moreover, it is written that my race,  
Hew'd Ammon, hip and thigh, from  
Aroer

On Arnon unto Minneth." Here her  
face

Glow'd, as I look'd at her.

She lock'd her lips : she left me where  
I stood :

"Glory to God," she sang, and past  
afar,

Thridding the sombre boskage of the  
wood,

Toward the morning-star.

Losing her carol I stood pensively,  
As one that from a casement leans  
his head,

When midnight bells cease ringing  
suddenly,

And the old year is dead.

"Alas ! alas !" a low voice, full of care,  
Murmur'd beside me : "Turn and  
look on me :

I am that Rosamond, whom men call  
fair,

If what I was I be.

"Would I had been some maiden  
coarse and poor !

O me, that I should ever see the  
light !

Those dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor  
Do hunt me, day and night."

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope  
and trust :

To whom the Egyptian : "O, you  
tame died !

You should have clung to Fulvia's  
waist, and thrust

The dagger thro' her side."

With that sharp sound the white  
dawn's creeping beams,

Stol'n to my brain, dissolved the  
mystery

Of folded sleep. The captain of my  
dreams

Ruled in the eastern sky.

Morn broaden'd on the borders of the  
dark,

Ere I saw her, who clasp'd in her  
last trance

Her murder'd father's head, or Joan of  
Arc.

A light of ancient France ;

Or her, who knew that Love can van-  
quish Death,

Who kneeling, with one arm about  
her king,

Drew forth the poison with her balmy  
breath,

Sweet as new buds in Spring.

No memory labors longer from the  
deep

Gold-mines of thought to lift the  
hidden ore

That glimpses, moving up, than I from  
sleep

To gather and tell o'er

Each little sound and sight. With  
what dull pain

Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to  
strike

Into that wondrous track of dreams  
again !

But no two dreams are like.

As when a soul laments, which hath  
been blest,

Desiring what is mingled with past  
years,

In yearnings that can never be express'd  
By signs or groans or tears ;

Because all words, tho' cull'd with  
choicest art,

Failing to give the bitter of the  
sweet,

Wither beneath the palate, and the  
heart

Faints, faded by its heat.

## MARGARET.

### I.

O SWEET pale Margaret,

O rare pale Margaret,

What lit your eyes with tearful power  
Like moonlight on a falling shower ?

Who lent you, love, your mortal dower  
Of pensive thought and aspect pale,

Your melancholy sweet and frail  
As perfume of the cuckoo-flower?  
From the westward-winding flood,  
From the evening-lighted wood,  
From all things outward you have  
won

A tearful grace, as tho' you stood  
Between the rainbow and the sun.  
The very smile before you speak,  
That dimples your transparent cheek,  
Encircles all the heart, and feedeth  
The senses with a still delight  
Of dainty sorrow without sound,  
Like the tender amber round,  
Which the moon about her spread-  
eth,

Moving thro' a fleecy night.

## II.

You love, remaining peacefully,  
To hear the murmur of the strife  
But enter not the toil of life.  
Your spirit is the calmed sea,  
Laid by the tumult of the fight.  
You are the evening star, always  
Remaining betwixt dark and bright :  
Lull'd echoes of laborious day  
Come to you, gleams of mellow light  
Float by you on the verge of night.

## III.

What can it matter, Margaret,  
What songs below the waning stars ;  
The lion-heart, Plantagenet,  
Sang looking thro' his prison bars ?  
Exquisite Margaret, who can tell  
The last wild thought of Chatelet,  
Just ere the falling axe did part  
The burning brain from the true  
heart,  
Even in her sight he loved so well ?

## IV.

A fairy shield your Genius made  
And gave you on your natal day.  
Your sorrow, only sorrow's shade,  
Keeps real sorrow far away.  
You move not in such solitudes,  
You are not less divine,  
But more human in your moods,  
Than your twin-sister, Adeline.  
Your hair is darker, and your eyes  
Touch'd with a somewhat darker  
hue,  
And less ærially blue,  
But ever trembling thro' the dew  
Of dainty-woful sympathies.

## V.

O sweet pale Margaret,  
O rare pale Margaret,  
Come down, come down, and hear me  
speak :  
Tie up the ringlets on your cheek :  
The sun is just about to set,  
The arching limes are tall and shady,  
And faint, rainy lights are seen,  
Moving in the leavy beech.  
Rise from the feast of sorrow, lady,  
Where all day long you sit between  
Joy and woe, and whisper each.  
Or only look across the lawn,  
Look out below your bower-eaves,

Look down, and let your blue eyes  
dawn  
Upon me thro' the jasmine-leaves.

## THE BLACKBIRD.

O BLACKBIRD ! sing me something  
well :  
While all the neighbors shoot thee  
round,  
I keep smooth plats of fruitful  
ground,  
Where thou may'st warble, eat and  
dwell.  
The espaliers and the standards all  
Are thine ; the range of lawn and  
park :  
The unnetted black-hearts ripen  
dark,  
All thine, against the garden wall.  
Yet, tho' I spared thee all the spring,  
Thy sole delight is, sitting still,  
With that cold dagger of thy bill,  
To fret the summer jenneting.  
A golden bill ! the silver tongue,  
Cold February loved, is dry :  
Plenty corrupts the melody  
That made thee famous once, when  
young :

And in the sultry garden-squares,  
Now thy flute-notes are changed to  
coarse,  
I hear thee not at all, or hoarse  
As when a lawker hawks his wares.  
Take warning ! he that will not sing  
While yon sun prospers in the blue,  
Shall sing for want, ere leaves are  
new,  
Caught in the frozen palms of Spring.

## THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

FULL knee-deep lies the winter snow,  
And the winter winds are wearily  
sighing :  
Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,  
And tread softly and speak low  
For the old year lies a-dying.  
Old year, you must not die ;  
You came to us so readily,  
You lived with us so steadily,  
Old year, you shall not die.  
He lieth still : he doth not move :  
He will not see the dawn of day.  
He hath no other life above.  
He gave me a friend, and a true true  
love,  
And the New-year will take 'em away.  
Old year, you must not go ;  
So long as you have been with us,  
Such joy as you have seen with us,  
Old year, you shall not go.  
He froth'd his bumpers to the brim ;  
A jollier year we shall not see.  
But tho' his eyes are waxing dim,  
And tho' his foes speak ill of him,  
He was a friend to me.  
Old year, you shall not die :

We did so laugh and cry with you,  
I've half a mind to die with you,  
Old year, if you must die.

He was full of joke and jest,  
But all his merry quips are o'er.  
To see him die, across the waste  
His son and heir doth ride post-haste,  
But he'll be dead before.

Every one for his own.

The night is starry and cold, my  
friend,

And the New-year blithe and bold,  
my friend,

Comes up to take his own.

How hard he breathes ! over the snow  
I heard just now the crowing cock.  
The shadows flicker to and fro :  
The cricket chirps : the light burns  
low :

'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.

Shake hands, before you die.

Old year, we'll dearly rue for you :

What is it we can do for you ?

Speak out before you die.

His face is growing sharp and thin.

Alack ! our friend is gone.

Close up his eyes : tie up his chin .

Step from the corpse, and let him in

That standeth there alone,

And waiteth at the door.

There's a new foot on the floor, my  
friend,

And a new face at the door, my  
friend,

A new face at the door.

---

### TO J. S.

THE wind, that beats the mountain,  
blows

More softly round the open wold,

And gently comes the world to those

That are cast in gentle mould,

And me this knowledge bolder made,

Or else I had not dared to flow

In these words toward you, and invade

Even with a verse your holy woe.

'Tis strange that those we lean on most,  
Those in whose laps our limbs are  
nursed,

Fall into shadow, soonest lost :

Those we love first are taken first.

God gives us love. Something to love

He lends us ; but, when love is grown

To ripeness, that on which it thrives

Falls off, and love is left alone.

This is the curse of time. Alas !

In grief I am not all unlearn'd ;

Once thro' mine own doors Death did  
pass ;

One went, who never hath return'd.

He will not smile—not speak to me

Once more. Two years his chair is  
seen

Empty before us. That was he

Without whose life I had not been.

Your loss is rarer ; for this star  
Rose with you thro' a little arc  
Of heaven, nor having wander'd far  
Shot on the sudden into dark.

I knew your brother : his mute dust  
I honor and his living worth :  
A man more pure and bold and just  
Was never born into the earth.

I have not look'd upon you nigh,  
Since that dear soul hath fall'n  
asleep.

Great Nature is more wise than I :

I will not tell you not to weep.

And tho' mine own eyes fill with dew,  
Drawn from the spirit thro' the brain,  
I will not even preach to you,  
' "Weep, weeping dulls the inward  
pain."

Let Grief be her own mistress still.

She loveth her own anguish deep

More than much pleasure. Let her will

Be done—to weep or not to weep.

I will not say, " God's ordinance  
Of Death is blown in every wind ; "

For that is not a common chance

That takes away a noble mind.

His memory long will live alone

In all our hearis, as mournful light

That broods above the fallen sun,

And dwells in heaven half the night.

Vain solace ! Memory standing near

Cast down her eyes, and in her throat

Her voice seem'd distant, and a tear

Dropt on the letters as I wrote.

I wrote I know not what. In truth,

How *should* I soothe you anyway,

Who miss the brother of your youth ?

Yet something I did wish to say :

For he too was a friend to me :

Both are my friends, and my true  
breast

Bleedeth for both ; yet it may be

That only silence suiteth best.

Words weaker than your grief would

make

Grief more. 'Twere better I should  
cease

Although myself could almost take

The place of him that sleeps in peace.

Sleep sweetly, tender heart, in peace :

Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,

While the stars burn, the moons in-  
crease.

And the great ages onward roll.

Sleep till the end, true soul and sweet,

Nothing comes to thee new or strange

Sleep full of rest from head to feet ;

Lie still, dry dust, secure of change.

---

You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,

Within this region I subsist,

Whose spirits falter in the mist,

And languish for the purple seas ?

It is the land that freemen till,  
That sober-suited Freedom chose,  
The land, where girt with friends or  
foes

A man may speak the thing he will ;

A land of settled government,  
A land of just and old renown,  
Where Freedom broadens slowly  
•down

From precedent to precedent :

Where faction seldom gathers head,  
But by degrees to fulness wrought,  
The strength of some diffusive  
thought [spread,

Hath time and space to work and

Should banded unions persecute

Opinion, and induce a time  
When single thought is civil crime,  
And individual freedom mute ;

Tho' Power should make from land to  
land

The name of Britain trebly great—  
Tho' every channel of the State  
Should almost choke with golden sand—

Yet waft me from the harbor-mouth,  
Wild wind ! I seek a warmer sky,  
And I will see before I die

The palms and temples of the South.

OF old sat Freedom on the heights,  
The thunders breaking at her feet :  
Above her shook the starry lights :  
She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,  
Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,  
But fragments of her mighty voice  
Came rolling on the wind.

Then steep she down thro' town and  
field

To mingle with the human race,  
And part by part to men reveal'd  
The fullness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,  
From her isle-altar gazing down,  
Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks,  
And King-like, wears the crown :

Her open eyes desire the truth.

The wisdom of a thousand years  
Is in them. May perpetual youth  
Keep dry their light from tears ;

That her fair form may stand and  
shine,

Make bright our days and light our  
dreams,

Turning to scorn with lips divine  
The falsehood of extremes !

Love thou thy land, with love far-  
brought

From out the storied Past, and used  
Within the Present, but transfused.  
Thro' future time by power of thought.

True love turn'd round on fixed poles,  
Love, that endures not sordid ends,  
For English natures, freemen, friends  
Thy brothers and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,  
Nor feed with crude imaginings  
The herd, wild hearts and feeble  
wings,

That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might  
To weakness, neither hide the ray  
From those, not blind, who wait for  
day,

Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds;  
But let her herald, Reverence, fly  
Before her to whatever sky  
Bearseed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the  
years :

Cut Prejudice against the grain :  
But gentle words are always gain :  
Regard the weakness of thy peers :

Nor toil for title, place, or touch  
Of pension, neither count on praise :  
It grows to guerdon after-days :  
Nor deal in watch-words over much :

Not clinging to some ancient saw ;  
Not master'd by some modern term ;  
Not swift nor slow to change, but  
firm :

And in its season bring the law ;

That from Discussion's lip may fall  
With Life, that, working strongly,  
binds—

Set in all lights by many minds,  
To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,  
And moist and dry, devising long,  
Thro' many agents making strong,  
Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should control  
Our being, lest we rust in ease,  
We all are changed by still degrees,  
All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free  
To ingroove itself with that, which  
flies,

And work, a joint of state, that plies  
Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying, hard to shape in act ;  
For all the past of Time reveals  
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,  
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife  
A motion toiling in the gloom—  
The Spirit of the years to come  
Yearning to mix himself with Life

A slow-develop'd strength awaits  
Completion in a painful school  
Phantoms of other forms of rule,  
New Majesties of mighty States—

The warders of the growing hour,  
But vague in vapor, hard to mark ;  
And round them sea and air are dark  
With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd,  
Is bodied forth the second whole.  
Regard gradation, lest the soul  
Of Discord race the rising wind ;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,  
And heap their ashes on the head ;  
To shame the boast so often made,  
That we are wiser than our sires.

Oh yet, if Nature's evil star  
Drive men in manhood, as in youth,  
To follow flying steps of Truth  
Across the brazen bridge of war —

If New and Old, disastrous feud,  
Must ever shock, like armed foes,  
And this be true, till Time shall  
close,  
That Principles are rain'd in blood ;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease  
To hold his hope thro' shame and  
guilt,  
But with his hand against the hilt,  
Would pace the troubled land, like  
Peace ;

Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,  
Would serve his kind in deed and  
word,  
Certain, if knowledge bring the  
sword,  
That knowledge takes the sword  
away—

Would love the gleams of good that  
broke  
From either side, nor veil his eyes :  
And if some dreadful need should  
rise  
Would strike, and firmly, and one  
stroke :

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,  
As we bear blossoms of the dead ;  
Earn well the thrifty months, nor  
wed  
Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

#### THE GOOSE.

I HNEW an old wife lean and poor,  
Her rags scarce held together ;  
There strode a stranger to the door,  
And it was windy weather.

He held a goose upon his arm,  
He utter'd rhyme and reason,  
“ Here, take the goose, and keep you  
warm,  
It is a stormy season.”

She caught the white goose by the leg,  
A goose—'twas no great matter.  
The goose let fall a golden egg  
With cackle and with clatter.

She dropt the goose, and caught the  
pelf.  
And ran to tell her neighbors ;  
And bless'd herself, and cursed herself  
And rest'd from her labors.

And feeding high, and living soft,  
Grew plump and able-bodied ;  
Until the grave churchwarden doff'd,  
The parson smirk'd and nodded.

So sitting, served by man and maid,  
She felt her heart grow prouder :  
But ah ! the more the white goose laid  
It clack'd and cackled louder.

It clutter'd here, it chuckled there ;  
It stirr'd the old wife's mettle :  
She shifted in her elbow-chair,  
And hurl'd the pan and kettle.

“ A quinsy choke thy cursed note ! ”

Then wax'd her anger stronger.

“ Go, take the goose, and wring her  
throat,

I will not bear it longer.”

Then yelp'd the cur, and yawl'd the  
cat ;

Ran Gaffer, stumbled Gammer.  
The goose flew this way and flew that,  
And fill'd the house with clamor.

As head and heels upon the floor  
They flounder'd all together,  
There strode a stranger to the door,  
And it was windy weather :

He took the goose upon his arm,  
He utter'd words of scorning ;

“ So keep you cold, or keep you warm,  
It is a stormy morning.”

The wild wind rang from park and  
plain,

And round the attics rumbled,  
Till all the tables danced again,  
And half the chimneys tumbled.

The glass blew in, the fire blew out,  
The blast was hard and harder.

Her cap blew off, her gown blew up,  
And a whirlwind clear'd the larder :

And while on all sides breaking loose  
Her household fled the danger,

Quoth she, “ The Devil take the goose  
And God forget the stranger ! ”

#### THE EPIC.

AT Francis Allen's on the Christmas-  
eve,—

The game of forfeits done—the girls  
all kiss'd

Beneath the sacred bush and past  
away—

The parson Holmes, the poet Everard  
Hall,

The host, and I sat round the wassail-  
bowl.

Then half-way ebb'd : and there we  
held a talk,

How all the old honor had from  
Christmas gone,

Or gone, or dwindled down to some  
odd games

In some odd nooks like this ; till I,  
tired out

With cutting eights that day upon the  
pond,

Where, three times slipping from the  
outer edge.  
I bump'd the ice into three several  
stars,  
Fell in a doze; and half-awake I heard  
The parson taking wide and wider  
sweeps,  
Now harping on the church-commis-  
sioners,  
Now hawking at Geology and schism;  
Until I woke, and found him settled  
down  
Upon the general decay of faith  
Right thro' the world, "at home was  
little left,  
And none abroad: there was no an-  
chor, none,  
To hold by." Francis, laughing, clapt  
his hand  
On Everard's shoulder, with, "I hold  
by him."  
"And I," quoth Everard, "by the was-  
sail-bowl."  
"Why yes," I said, "we knew your  
gift that way  
At college: but another which you  
had,  
I mean of verse (for so we held it  
then.)  
What came of that?" "You know,"  
said Frank, "he burnt  
His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve  
books"—  
And then to me demanding why? "Oh,  
sir,  
He thought that nothing new was said,  
or else  
Something so said 'twas nothing—  
that a truth  
Looks freshest in the fashion of the  
day:  
God knows: he has a mint of reasons:  
ask.  
It pleased me well enough." "Nay,  
nay," said Hall,  
"Why take the style of those heroic  
times?  
For nature brings not back the Masto-  
don,  
Nor we those times; and why should  
any man  
Remodel models? these twelve books  
of mine  
Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-  
worth,  
Mere chaff and dross, much better  
burnt." "But I,"  
Said Francis, "pick'd the eleventh  
from this hearth,  
And have it: keep a thing, its use will  
come.  
I heard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes."  
He laugh'd, and I, though sleepy, like  
a horse  
That hears the corn-bin open, prick'd  
my ears;  
For I remember'd Everard's college  
fame  
When we were Freshmen: then at my  
request

He brought it; and the poet little  
urged,  
But with some prelude of disparage-  
ment,  
Read, mouthing out his hollow oes and  
aes,  
Deep-chested music, and to this re-  
sult.

## MORTE D'ARTHUR.

So all day long the noise of battle  
roll'd  
Among the mountains by the winter  
sea;  
Until King Arthur's table, man by  
man,  
Had fall'n in Lyonness about their  
Lord,  
King Arthur: then, because his wound  
was deep,  
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,  
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,  
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,  
A broken chancel with a broken cross,  
That stood on a dark strait of barren  
land.  
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one  
Lay a great water, and the moon was  
full.  
Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-  
vere:  
"The sequel of to-day unsolders all  
The goodliest fellowship of famous  
knights  
Whereof this world holds record. Such  
a sleep  
They sleep—the men I loved. I think  
that we  
Shall never more, at any future time,  
Delight our souls with talk of knightly  
deeds,  
Walking about the gardens and the  
halls  
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.  
I perish by this people which I made,—  
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come  
again  
To rule once more—but let what will  
be, be,  
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm  
That without help I cannot last till  
morn.  
Thou therefore take my brand Excali-  
bur,  
Which was my pride: for thou remem-  
berest how  
In those old days, one summer noon,  
an arm  
Rose up from out the bosom of the  
lake,  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-  
derful,  
Holding the sword—and how I row'd  
across  
And took it, and have worn it, like a  
king:  
And, wheresoever I am sung or told  
In aftertime, this also shall be known:  
But now delay not: take Excalibur,

And fling him far into the middle mere:

Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:

"It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,

Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.

A little thing may harm a wounded man.

Yet I thy hest will all perform at full;

Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word."

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept

And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,

Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,

Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang

Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down

By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock,

Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,

And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,

Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth

And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt:

For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,

Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work

Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long

That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,

This way and that dividing the swift mind,

In act to throw but at the last it seem'd

Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd

There in the many-knotted waterflags,

That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.

So strode he back slow to the wounded King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:

"Hast thou perform'd my mission which I gave?

What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:

"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,

And the wild water lapping on the crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:

"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,

Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight:

For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,

Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.

This is a shameful thing for men to lie

Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again

As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing

I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time

Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere;

Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought;

But when he saw the wonder of the hilt.

How curiously and strangely chased, he smote

His palms together, and he cried aloud.

"And if indeed I cast the brand away,

Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,

Should thus be lost forever from the earth,

Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.

What good should follow this, if this were done?

What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,

Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.

Were it well to obey then, if a king demand

An act unprofitable, against himself? The King is sick, and knows not what he does.

What record, or what relic of my lord Should be to aftertime, but empty breath

And rumors of a doubt? but were this kept,

Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,

Some one might show it at a joust of arms,

Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,

Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.

Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps

Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'

So might some old man speak in the aftertime

To all the people, winning reverence.

But now much honor and much fame were lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,

And hid Excalibur the second time,

And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily :

"What is it thou hast seen ? or what hast heard ?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

"I heard the water lapping on the crag, And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath

"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue, Unknightly, traitor-hearted ! Woe is me !

Authority forgets a dying king, Laid widow'd of the power in his eye That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,

In whom should meet the offices of all, Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt ;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.

Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice, And the third time may prosper, get thee hence :

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur, I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,

And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged

Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,

And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand

Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,

And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,

Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,

Seen where the moving isles of winter shock

By night, with noises of the northern sea.

So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur: But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the mere.

And lightly went the other to the King. Then spoke King Arthur, drawing

thicker breath :

"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.

Speak out: what is it thou hast heard or seen ?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:

"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems.

Should blind my purpose, for I never

saw,  
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I

die,  
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal

men,  
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him ;

But when I look'd again, behold an arm,

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him ;

Three times, and drew him under in the mere."

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard :

"My end draws nigh ; 'tis time that I were gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,

And bear me to the margin; yet I fear

My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,

Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,

And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes

As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,

And would have spoken, but he found not words,

Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,

And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,

Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed

When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,

Muttering and murmuring at his ear. "Quick, quick !

I fear it is too late, and I shall die."

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,

Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,

Larger than human on the frozen hills. He heard the deep behind him, and a cry

Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.

Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves And barren chasms, and all to left and right

The bare black cliff clang'd round him as he based.

His feet on juts of slippery crag that ring.

Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—

And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,  
And the long glories of the winter  
moon.

Then saw they how there hove a  
dusky barge,  
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to  
stein,  
Beneath them ; and descending they  
were ware  
That all the decks were dense with  
stately forms  
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a  
dream—by these  
Three Queens with crowns of gold—  
and from them rose  
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,  
And, as it were one voice, an agony  
Of lamentation, like a wind, that  
shrills

All night in a waste land, where no  
one comes,  
Or hath come, since the making of the  
world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, " Place me  
in the barge,"  
And to the barge they came. There  
those three Queens  
Put forth their hands, and took the  
King, and wept.

But she, that rose the tallest of them  
all

And fairest, laid his head upon her  
lap,

And loosed the shatter'd casque, and  
chafed his hands,

And call'd him by his name, complain-  
ing loud,

And dropping bitter tears against his  
brow

Striped with dark blood: for all his  
face was white

And colorless, and like the wither'd  
moon

Smote by the fresh beam of the  
springing east

And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd  
with drops

Of onset ; and the light and lustrous  
curls—

That made his forehead like a rising  
sun

High from the daïs-throne—were  
parch'd with dust ;

Or, clotted into points and hanging  
loose,

Mix'd with the knightly growth that  
fringed his lips.

So like a shatter'd column lay the  
King ;

Not like that Arthur who, with lance  
in rest,

From spur to plume a star of tourna-  
ment,

Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and  
charged

Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bed-  
ivere,

" Ah ! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I  
go ?

Where shall I hide my forehead and  
my eyes ?

For now I see the true old times are  
dead,

When every morning brought a noble  
chance,

And every chance brought out a noble  
knight.

Such times have been not since the  
light that led

The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.

But now the whole ROUND TABLE is  
dissolved

Which was an image of the mighty  
world ;

And I, the last, go forth companionless,  
And the days darken round me, and

the years,  
Among new men, strange faces, other  
minds."

And slowly answered Arthur from  
barge :

" The older order changeth, yielding  
place to new,

And God fulfils himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt  
the world.

Comfort thyself : what comfort is in  
me ?

I have lived my life, and that which I  
have done

May He within himself make pure !  
but thou,

If thou shouldst never see my face  
again,

Pray for my soul. More things are  
wrought by prayer

Than this world dreams of. Wherefore,  
let thy voice

Rise like a fountain for me night and  
day.

For what are men better than sheep or  
goats

That nourish a blind life within the  
brain,

If, knowing God, they lift not hands  
of prayer

Both for themselves and those who  
call them friend ?

For so the whole round earth is every  
way

Bound by gold chains about the feet of  
God.

But now farewell. I am going a long  
way

With these thou seest—if indeed I  
go—

(For all my mind is clouded with a  
doubt)

To the island-valley of Avilion ;  
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any  
snow,

Nor ever wind blows loudly ; but it  
lies

Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with or-  
chard-lawns

And bowery hollows crown'd with  
summer sea,

Where I will heal me of my grievous  
wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar  
and sail  
Moved from the brink, like some full-  
breasted swan  
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,  
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes  
the flood  
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir  
Bedivere  
\* Revolving many memories, till the hull  
Look'd one black dot against the verge  
of dawn,  
And on the mere the wailing died away  
  
Here ended Hall, and our last light,  
that long  
Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness,  
flared and fell :  
At which the Parson, sent to sleep  
with sound,  
And waked with silence, grunted  
"Good!" but we  
Sat rapt: it was the tone with which  
he read—  
Perhaps some modern touches here  
and there  
Redeem'd it from the charge of nothingness—  
Or else we loved the man, and prized  
his work ;  
I know not : but we sitting, as I said,  
The cock crew loud ; as at that time  
of year  
The lusty bird takes every hour for  
dawn :  
Then Francis, muttering, like a man  
ill-used,  
"There now—that's nothing!" drew a  
little back,  
And drove his heel into the smoulder'd  
log,  
That sent a blast of sparkles up the  
flue :  
And so to bed ; where yet in sleep I  
seem'd  
To sail with Arthur under looming  
shores,  
Point after point ; till on to dawn,  
when dreams  
Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,  
To me, methought, who waited with a  
crowd,  
There came a bark that, blowing for-  
ward, bore  
King Arthur, like a modern gentleman  
Of stateliest port ; and all the people  
cried,  
"Arthur is come again : he cannot  
die."  
Then those that stood upon the hills  
behind  
Repeated—"Come again, and thrice as  
fair ;"  
And, further inland, voices echoed—  
"Come  
With all good things, and war shall be  
no more."  
At this a hundred bells began to peal,  
That with the sound I woke, and heard  
indeed

The clear church-bells ring in the  
Christmas morn.

THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER;  
OR, THE PICTURES.

THIS morning is the morning of the  
day,  
When I and Eustace from the city went  
To see the Gardener's Daughter ; I and  
he,  
Brothers in Art : a friendship so com-  
plete  
Portion'd in halves between us, that  
we grew  
The fable of the city where we dwelt.  
My Eustace might have sat for Her-  
cules ;  
So muscular he spread, so broad of  
breast.  
He, by some law that holds in love,  
and draws  
The greater to the lesser, long desired  
A certain miracle of symmetry,  
A miniature of loveliness, all grace  
Summ'd up and closed in little ;—Julie-  
et, she  
So light of foot, so light of spirit,—O,  
she  
To me myself, for some three careless  
moons,  
The summer pilot of an empty heart  
Unto the shores of nothing! Know you  
not  
Such touches are but embassies of love,  
To tamper with the feelings, ere he  
found  
Empire for life? but Eustace painted  
her,  
And said to me, she sitting with us  
then,  
"When will you paint like this?" and  
I replied,  
(My words were half in earnest, half  
in jest,)  
"Tis not your work, but Love's. Love,  
unperceived,  
A more ideal Artist he than all.  
Came, drew your pencil from you,  
made those eyes  
Darker than darkest pansies, and that  
hair  
More black than ashbuds in the front  
of March."  
And Juliet answer'd laughing, "Go  
and see  
The Gardener's daughter : trust me,  
after that,  
You scarce can fail to match his mas-  
terpiece."  
And up we rose, and on the spur we  
went.  
Not wholly in the busy world, nor  
quite  
Beyond it, blooms the garden that I  
love.  
News from the humming city comes  
to it

In sound of funeral or of marriage  
bells ;  
And, sitting muffled in dark leaves,  
you hear  
The windy clanging of the minster  
clock ;  
Although between it and the garden  
lies  
A league of grass, wash'd by a slow  
broad stream,  
That, stirr'd with languid pulses of the  
oar,  
Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on,  
Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge  
Crown'd with the minster-towers.

The fields between  
Are dewy-fresh, browsed by deep-ud-  
der'd kine,  
And all about the large lime feathers  
low,  
The lime a summer home of murmur-  
ous wings.

In that still place she, hoarded in  
herself,  
Grew, seldom seen : not less among us  
lived  
Her fame from lip to lip. Who had  
not heard  
Of Rose, the Gardener's daughter ?  
Where was he,  
So blunt in memory, so old at heart,  
At such a distance from his youth in  
grief,  
That, having seen, forgot ? The com-  
mon mouth,  
So gross to express delight, in praise of  
her

Grew oratory. Such a lord is Love,  
And Beauty such a mistress of the  
world.

And if I said that Fancy, led by Love,  
Would play with flying forms and im-  
ages,

Yet this is also true, that, long before  
I look'd upon her, when I heard her  
name

My heart was like a prophet to my  
heart,

And told me I should love. A crowd  
of hopes,

That sought to sow themselves like  
winged seeds,

Born out of everything I heard and  
saw,

Flutter'd about my senses and my  
soul ;

And vague desires, like fitful blasts of  
balm

To one that travels quickly, made the  
air

Of Life delicious, and all kinds of  
thought,

That verged upon them, sweeter than  
the dream

Dream'd by a happy man, when the  
dark East.

Unseen, is brightening to his bridal  
morn.

And sure this orbit of the memory  
folds

For ever in itself the day we went  
To see her. All the land in flowery  
squares,  
Beneath a broad and equal-blowing  
wind,  
Smelt of the coming summer, as one  
large cloud  
Drew downward : but all else of  
Heaven was pure  
Up to the Sun, and May from verge to  
verge.

And May with me from head to heel.  
And now,  
As tho' 'twere yesterday, as tho' it  
were

The hour just flown, that morn with all  
its sound,  
(For those old Mays had thrice the life  
of these,)

Rings in mine ears. The steer forgot  
to graze,

And, where the hedge-row cuts the  
pathway, stood,

Leaning his horns into the neighbor  
field,

And lowing to his fellows. From the  
woods

Came voices of the well-contented  
doves.

The lark could scarce get out his notes  
for joy,

But shook his song together as he  
near'd

His happy home, the ground. To left  
and right,

The cuckoo told his name to all the  
hills ;

The mellow ouzel fluted in the elm ;  
The redcap whistled ; and the nightin-  
gale

Sang loud, as tho' he were the bird of  
day.

And Eustace turn'd, and smiling said  
to me,

"Hear how the bushes echo! by my life,  
These birds have joyful thoughts.

Think you they sing  
Like poets, from the vanity of song ?

Or have they any sense of why they  
sing ?

And would they praise the heavens for  
wha' they have ?"

And I made answer. "Were there noth-  
ing else

For which to praise the heavens but  
only love,

That only love were cause enough for  
praise."

Lightly he laugh'd, as one that read  
my thought,

And on we went ; but ere an hour had  
pass'd,

We reach'd a meadow slanting to the  
North ;

Down which a well-worn pathway  
courted us

To one green wicket in a privet hedge ;  
This, yielding, gave into a grassy walk

Thro' crowded lilac-ambush trimly  
pruned,

And one warm gust, full-fed with perfume, blew  
 Beyond us, as we enter'd in the cool.  
 The garden stretches southward. In the midst  
 A cedar spread his dark-green layers of shade.  
 The garden-glasses shone, and momentarily  
 The twinkling laurel scatter'd silver lights.  
 "Eustace," I said, "this wonder keeps the house."  
 He nodded, but a moment afterwards  
 He cried, "Look! look!" Before he ceased I turn'd,  
 And, ere a star can wink, beheld her there.  
 For up the porch there grew an Eastern rose,  
 That, flowering high, the last night's gale had caught,  
 And blown across the walk. One arm aloft—  
 Gown'd in pure white, that fitted to the shape—  
 Holding the bush, to fix it back, she stood.  
 A single stream of all her soft brown hair  
 Pour'd on one side: the shadow of the flowers  
 Stole all the golden gloss, and, wavering  
 Lovingly lower, trembled on her waist—  
 Ah, happy shade—and still went wavering down,  
 But, ere it touch'd a foot, that might have danced  
 The greensward into greener circles, dipt,  
 And mix'd with shadows of the common ground!  
 But the full day dwelt on her brows, and sunn'd  
 Her violet eyes, and all her Hebe bloom,  
 And doubled his own warmth against her lips,  
 And on the bounteous wave of such a breast  
 As never pencil drew. Half light, half shade,  
 She stood, a sight to make an old man young.  
 So rapt, we near'd the house, but she, a Rose  
 In roses, mingled with her fragrant toil,  
 Nor heard us come, nor from her ten-dance turn'd  
 Into the world without; till close at hand,  
 And almost ere I knew mine own intent,  
 This murmur broke the stillness of that air  
 Which brooded round about her:  
 "Ah, one rose,  
 One rose, but one, by those fair fingers cull'd.

Were worth a hundred kisses press'd on lips  
 Less exquisite than thine."

She look'd: but all suffused with blushes—neither self-possess'd  
 Nor startled, but betwixt this mood and that,  
 Divided in a graceful quiet—paused,  
 And dropt the branch she held, and turning, wound  
 Her looser hair in braid, and stirr'd her lips  
 For some sweet answer, tho' no answer came,  
 Not yet refused the rose, but granted it,  
 And moved away, and left me, statue-like,  
 In act to render thanks.

I, that whole day, saw her no more, altho' I linger'd there  
 Till every daisy slept, and Love's white star  
 Beam'd thro' the thicken'd cedar in the dusk.

So home we went, and all the live-long way  
 With solemn gibe did Eustace banter me.

"Now," said he, "will you climb the top of Art.  
 You cannot fail but work in hues to dim"

The Titianic Flora. Will you match My Juliet? you, not you,—the Master, Love,

A more ideal Artist he than all." So home I went, but could not sleep for joy,  
 Reading her perfect features in the gloom,

Kissing the rose she gave me o'er and o'er,  
 And shaping faithful record of the glance

That graced the giving—such a noise of life  
 Swarm'd in the golden present, such a voice

Call'd to me from the years to come, and such  
 A length of bright horizon rimm'd the dark.

And all that night I heard the watchman peal

The sliding season: all that night I heard

The heavy clocks knolling the drowsy hours.

The drowsy hours, dispensers of all good,

O'er the mute city stole with folded wings,

Distilling odors on me as they went  
 To greet their fairer sisters of the East.

Love at first sight, first-born, and heir to all,

Made this night thus. Henceforward  
squall nor storm  
Could keep me from that Eden where  
she dwelt.

Light pretexes drew me : sometimes a  
Dutch love

For tulips ; then for roses, moss or  
musk,

To grace my city-rooms ; or fruits and  
cream

Served in the weeping elm ; and more  
and more

A word could bring the color to my  
cheek ;

A thought would fill my eyes with hap-  
py dew ;

Love trebled life within me, and with  
each

The year increased.

The daughters of the year,  
One after one, thro' that still garden  
pass'd :

Each garlanded with her peculiar  
flower

Danced into light, and died into the  
shade ;

And each in passing touch'd with some  
new grace

Or seem'd to touch her, so that day by  
day,

Like one that never can be wholly  
known,

Her beauty grew ; till Autumn brought  
an hour

For Eustace, when I heard his deep  
" I will "

Breathed, like the covenant of a God,  
to hold

From thence thro' all the worlds : but  
I rose up

Full of his bliss, and following her  
dark eyes

Felt earth as air beneath me, till I  
reach'd

The wicket-gate, and found her stand-  
ing there.

There sat we down upon a garden  
mound,

Two mutually enfolded ; Love, the  
third,

Between us, in the circle of his arms  
Enwound us both ; and over many a  
range

Of wining lime the gray cathedral  
towers,

Across a hazy glimmer of the west,  
Reveal'd their shining windows : from  
them clash'd

The bells ; we listen'd ; with the time  
we play'd ;

We spoke of other things ; we coursed  
about

The subject most at heart, more near  
and near,

Like doves about a dovecote, wheeling  
round

The central wish, until we settled  
there.

Then, in that time and place, I spoke  
to her,

Requiring, tho' I knew it was mine own  
Yet for the pleasure that I took to hear,  
Requiring at her hand the greatest gift,  
A woman's heart, the heart of her I  
loved ;

And in that time and place she an-  
swer'd me,

And in the compass of three little  
words,

More musical than ever came in one,  
The silver fragments of a broken voice,  
Made me most happy, faltering, " I am  
thine."

Shall I cease here ? Is this enough  
to say

That my desire, like all strongest  
hopes,

By its own energy-fulfill'd itself,  
Merged in completion ? Would you  
learn at full

How passion rose thro' circumstantial  
grades

Beyond all grades develop'd ? and in-  
deed

I had not stayed so long to tell you all,  
But while I mused came Memory with

sad eyes,  
Holding the folded annals of my youth ;

And while I mused, Love with knit  
brows went by,

And with a flying finger swept my lips,  
And spake, " Be wise : not easily for-  
given

Are those, who, setting wide the doors  
that bar

The secret bridal chambers of the  
heart,

Let in the day." Here, then, my words  
have end.

Yet might I tell of meetings, of fare-  
wells—

Of that which came between, more  
sweet than each,

In whispers, like the whispers of the  
leaves

That tremble round a nightingale—in  
sighs

Which perfect Joy, perplex'd for utter-  
ance,

Stole from her sister Sorrow. Might I  
not tell

Of difference, reconciliation, pledges  
given,

And vows, where there was never need  
of vows,

And kisses, where the heart on one  
wild leap

Hung tranced from all pulsation, as  
above

The heavens between their fairy fleeces  
pale

Sow'd all their mystic gulfs with fleet-  
ing stars ;

Or while the balmy glooming, cres-  
cent-lit,

Spread the light haze along the river-  
shores,

And in the hollows ; or as once we met  
Unheedful, tho' beneath a whispering  
rain

Night slid down one long stream of  
sighing wind,  
And in her bosom bore the baby. Sleep.  
But this whole hour your eyes have  
been intent

On that veil'd picture—veil'd, for what  
it holds

May not be dwelt on by the common  
day.

This prelude has prepared thee. Raise  
thy soul;

Make thine heart ready with thine  
eyes : the time

Is come to raise the veil.

Behold her there,  
As I beheld her ere she knew my  
heart,

My first, last love; the idol of my  
youth,

The darling of my manhood; and, alas!  
Now the most blessed memory of mine  
age.

#### D O R A .

With farmer Allan at the farm abode  
William and Dora. William was his  
son,

And she his niece. He often look'd  
at them,

And often thought, "I'll make them  
man and wife."

Now Dora felt her uncle's will in all,  
And yearn'd towards William; but  
the youth, because

He had been always with her in the  
house,

Thought not of Dora.

Then there came a day  
When Allan call'd his son, and said,

"My son :  
I married late, but I would wish to see  
My grandchild on my knees before I  
die :

And I have set my heart upon a match.  
Now therefore look to Dora : she is  
well

To look to : thrifty too beyond her  
age.

She is my brother's daughter : he and I  
Had once hard words, and parted, and  
he died

In foreign lands ; but for his sake I  
bred

His daughter Dora : take her for your  
wife ;

For I have wish'd this marriage, night  
and day,

For many years." But William an-  
swer'd short :

"I cannot marry Dora ; by my life,  
I will not marry Dora." Then the old  
man

Was wroth, and doubled up his hands,  
and said :

"You will not, boy ! you dare to an-  
swer thus !

But in my time a father's word was  
law,

And so it shall be now for me. Look  
to it ;

Consider, William : take a month to  
think,

And let me have an answer to my  
wish -

Or, by the Lord that made me, you  
shall pack,

And never more darken my doors  
again."

But William answer'd madly ; bit his  
lips,

And broke away. The more he look'd  
at her

The less he liked her ; and his ways  
were harsh ;

But Dora bore them meekly. Then  
before

The month was out he left his father's  
house,

And hired himself to work within the  
fields ;

And half in love, half spite, he woo'd  
and wed

A laborer's daughter, Mary Morrison.  
Then, when the bells were ringing,

Allan call'd  
His niece and said : "My girl, I love  
you well ;

But if you speak with him that was  
my son,

Or change a word with her he calls  
his wife,

My home is none of yours. My will is  
law."

And Dora promised, being meek. She  
thought,

"It cannot be : my uncle's mind will  
change !"

And days went on, and there was  
born a boy

To William ; then distresses came on  
him

And day by day he pass'd his father's  
gate,

Heart-broken, and his father help'd  
him not.

But Dora stored what little she could  
save,

And sent it them by stealth, nor did  
they know

Who sent it ; till at last a fever seized  
On William, and in harvest time he  
died.

Then Dora went to Mary. Mary sat  
And look'd with tears upon her boy,  
and thought

Hard things of Dora. Dora came and  
said :

"I have obey'd my uncle until now,  
And I have sinn'd, for it was all thro'  
me

This evil came on William at the  
first.

But, Mary, for the sake of him that's  
gone,

And for your sake, the woman that he  
chos,

And for this orphan, I am come to  
you :

You know there has not been for these  
five years  
So full a harvest: let me take the  
boy,

And I will set him in my uncle's eye  
Among the wheat; that when his  
heart is glad  
Of the full harvest, he may see the boy,  
And bless him for the sake of him  
that's gone."

And Dora took the child, and went  
her way  
Across the wheat, and sat upon a  
mound

That was unsown, where many pop-  
pies grew.

Far off the farmer came into the field  
And spied her not; for none of all his  
men

Dare tell him Dora waited with the  
child;

And Dora would have risen and gone  
to him,

But her heart fail'd her; and the reap-  
ers reap'd,

And the sun fell, and all the land was  
dark.

But when the morrow came she rose  
and took

The child once more, and sat upon  
the mound;

And made a little wreath of all the  
flowers;

That grew about, and tied it round his  
hat

To make him pleasing in her uncle's  
eye.

Then when the farmer pass'd into the  
field

Hespied her, and he left his men at  
work,

And came and said: "Where were  
you yesterday?"

Whose child is that? What are you  
doing here?"

So Dora cast her eyes upon the ground,  
And answer'd softly, "This is Wil-  
liam's child!"

"And did I not," said Allan, "did I  
not

Forbid you, Dora?" Dora said again:

"Do with me as you will, but take the  
child

And bless him for the sake of him  
that's gone!"

And Allan said, "I see it is a trick  
Got up betwixt you and the woman  
there.

I must be taught my duty, and by  
you!

You knew my word was law, and yet  
you dared

To slight it. Well—for I will take the  
boy;

But go you hence, and never see me  
more."

So saying, he took the boy, that cried  
aloud

And struggled hard. The wreath of  
flowers fell

At Dora's feet. She bow'd upon her  
hands,

And the boy's cry came to her from  
the field,

More and more distant. She bow'd  
down her head,

Remembering the day when first she  
came,

And all the things that had been. She  
bow'd down

And wept in secret; and the reapers  
reap'd,

And the sun fell, and all the land was  
dark.

Then Dora went to Mary's house,  
and stood

Upon the threshold. Mary saw the boy  
Was not with Dora. She broke out in  
praise

To God, that help'd her in her widow-  
hood.

And Dora said, "My uncle took the  
boy;

But, Mary, let me live and work with  
you:

He says that he will never see me  
more."

Then answer'd Mary, "This shall  
never be,

That thou shouldst take my trouble on  
thyself:

And, now I think, he shall not have  
the boy,

For he will teach him hardness, and to  
slight

His mother; therefore thou and I will  
go,

And I will have my boy, and bring him  
home;

And I will beg of him to take thee  
back:

But if he will not take thee back again,  
Then thou and I will live within one  
house,

And work for William's child, until he  
grows

Of age to help us."

So the women kiss'd  
Each other, and set out, and reach'd  
the farm.

The door was off the latch: they peep'd,  
and saw

The boy set up betwixt his grandsire's  
knees,

Who thrust him in the hollows of his  
arm,

And clapt him on the hands and on  
the cheeks,

Like one that loved him: and the lad  
stretch'd out

And babbled for the golden seal, that  
hung

From Allan's watch, and sparkled by  
the fire.

Then they came in: but when the boy  
beheld

His mother, he cried out to come to  
her:

And Allan set him down, and Mary  
said:

"O Father!—if you let me call you so—  
I never came a-begging for myself,  
Or William, or this child; but now I come

For Dora: take her back; she loves you well.

O Sir, when William died, he died at peace

With all men; for I ask'd him, and he said,

He could not ever rue his marrying me—

I had been a patient wife: but, Sir, he said

That he was wrong to cross his father thus:

'God bless him!' he said, 'and may he never know

The troubles I have gone thro'!' Then he turn'd

His face and pass'd—unhappy that I am!

But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for you

Will make him hard, and he will learn to slight

His father's memory; and take Dora back,

And let all this be as it was before."

So Mary said, and Dora hid her face

By Mary. There was silence in the room;

And all at once the old man burst in sobs:—

"I have been to blame—to blame. I have kill'd my son.

I have kill'd him—but I loved him—my dear son.

May God forgive me!—I have been to blame.

Kiss me, my children."

Then they clung about the old man's neck, and kiss'd him many times.

And all the man was broken with remorse;

And all his love came back a hundred fold;

And for three hours he sobb'd o'er William's child,

Thinking of William.

So those four abode within one house together; and as years

Went forward, Mary took another mate;

But Dora lived unmarried till her death.

#### AUDLEY COURT.

"THE Bull, the Fleece are cramm'd, and not a room

For love or money Let us picnic there

At Audley Court."

I spoke, while Audley feast

Humm'd like a hive all round the narrow quay,

To Francis, with a basket on his arm,

To Francis just alighted from the boat,

And breathing of the sea. "With all my heart,"

Said Francis. Then we shoulder'd thro' the swarm,

And rounded by the stillness of the beach

To where the bay runs up its latest horn.

We left the dying ebb that faintly lipp'd

The flat red granite; so by many a sweep

Of meadow smooth from aftermath we reach'd

The griffin-guarded gates, and pass'd thro' all

The pillar'd dusk of sounding sycamores,

And cross'd the garden to the garden-er's lodge,

With all its casements bedded, and its walls

And chimneys muffled in the leafy vine.

There, on a slope of orchard, Francis laid

A damask napkin wrought with horse and hound,

Brought out a dusky loaf that smelt of home,

And, half-cut-down, a pasty costly made,

Where quail and pigeon, lark and leveret lay,

Like fossils of the rock, with golden yolks

Imbedded and injellied; last, with these,

A flask of cider from his father's vats,

Prime, which I knew; and so we sat and eat

And talk'd old matters over; who was dead,

Who married, who was like to be, and how

The races went, and who would rent the hall:

Then touch'd upon the game, how scarce it was

This season; glancing thence, discuss'd the farm,

The fourfield system, and the price of grain;

And struck upon the corn-laws, where we split,

And came again together on the king With heated faces; till he laugh'd aloud;

And, while the blackbird on the pip-pin hung

To hear him, clapt his hand in mine and sang—

"Oh! who would fight and march and counter-march,

Be shot for sixpence in a battle-field, And shovell'd up into a bloody trench

Where no one knows? but let me live my life.

"Oh! who would cast and balance at a desk,  
Perch'd like a crow upon a three-legg'd stool,

Till all his juice is dried, and all his joints  
Are full of chalk? but let me live my life.

"Who'd serve the state? for if I carved my name  
Upon the cliffs that guard my native land,

I might as well have traced it in the sands;

The sea wastes all: but let me live my life.

"Oh! who would love? I woo'd a woman once,  
But she was sharper than an eastern wind,

And all my heart turn'd from her, as a thorn

Turns from the sea; but let me live my life."

He sang his song, and I replied with mine:

I found it in a volume, all of songs,  
Knock'd down to me, when old Sir Robert's pride,

His books — the more the pity, so I said —

Came to the hammer here in March — and this —

I set the words, and added names I knew.

"Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, sleep, and dream of me:

Sleep, Ellen, folded in thy sister's arm,

And sleeping, haply dream her arm is mine.

"Sleep, Ellen, folded in Emilia's arm;

Emilia, fairer than all else but thou,  
For thou art fairer than all else that is.

"Sleep, breathing health and peace upon her breast:

Sleep, breathing love and trust against her lip:

I go to-night: I come to-morrow morn.

"I go, but I return: I would I were

The pilot of the darkness and the dream.

Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, love, and dream of me."

So sang we each to either, Francis Hale,

The farmer's son, who lived across the bay,

My friend; and I, that having where-withal,

And in the fallow leisure of my life

A rolling stone of here and every-where,

Did what I would; but ere the night we rose

And saunter'd home beneath a moon that, just

In crescent, dimly rain'd about the leaf

Twilights of airy silver, till we reach'd

The limit of the hills; and as we sank

From rock to rock, upon the blooming quay,

The town was hush'd beneath us: lower down

The bay was oily calm; the harbor-buoy,

Sole star of phosphorescence in the calm,

With one green sparkle ever and anon

Dipt by itself, and we were glad at heart.

### WALKING TO THE MAIL.

John. I'm glad I walk'd. Now fresh the meadows look

Above the river, and, but a month ago,

The whole hill-side was redder than a fox.

Is yon plantation where this byway joins

The turnpike?

James. Yes.

John. And when does this come by?

James. The mail? At one o'clock.

John. What is it now?

James. A quarter to.

John. Whose house is that I see?

No, not the County Member's with the vane:

Up higher with the yewtree by it, and half

A score of gables.

James. That? Sir Edward Head's:

But he's abroad: the place is to be sold.

John. O, his. He was not broken.

James. No, sir, he,

Vex'd with a morbid devil in his blood

That veil'd the world with jaundice, hid his face

From all men, and commercing with himself,

He lost the sense that handles daily life —

That keeps us all in order more or less —

And sick of home went overseas for change.

John. And whither?

James. Nay, who knows? he's here and there.

But let him go; his devil goes with him,

As well as with his tenant, Jocky Dawes.

John. What's that?

James. You saw the man — on Monday, was it? —

There by the humpback'd willow; half stands up

And bristles; half has fall'n and made  
a bridge;

And there he caught the younker tick-  
ling trout —

Caught in *flagrante* — what's the Latin  
word?

*Delicto*: but his house, for so they say,  
Was haunted with a jolly ghost, that  
shook

The curtains, whined in lobbies, tapt  
at doors,

And rummaged like a rat: no servant  
stay'd:

The farmer next packs up his beds and  
chairs,

And all his household stuff; and with  
his boy

Betwixt his knees, his wife upon the  
tilt,

Sets out, and meets a friend who hails  
him. "What!

You're flitting!" "Yes, we're fit-  
ting," says the ghost,

(For they had pack'd the thing among  
the beds.)

"O well," says he, "you flitting with  
us too—

Jack, turn the horses' heads and home  
again."

*John*. He left his wife behind; for so  
I heard.

*James*. He left her, yes. I met my  
lady once:

A woman like a butt, and harsh as  
crabs.

*John*. O yet but I remember, ten  
years back—

'Tis now at least ten years—and then  
she was—

You could not light upon a sweeter  
thing:

A body slight and round, and like a  
pear

In growing, modest eyes, a hand, a  
foot

Lessening in perfect cadence, and a  
skin

As clean and white as privet when it  
flowers.

*James*. Ay, ay, the blossom fades,  
and they that loved

At first like dove and dove were cat  
and dog.

She was the daughter of a cottager,  
Out of her sphere. What betwixt

shame and pride,  
New things and old, himself and her,

she sour'd  
To what she is: a nature never kind!

Like men, like manners: like breeds  
like, they say,

Kind nature is the best: those man-  
ners next

That fit us like a nature second-hand;  
Which are indeed the manners of the

great.  
*John*. But I had heard it was this  
bill that past,

And fear of change at home, that  
drove him hence.

*James*. That was the last drop in the  
cup of gall.

I once was near him, when his bailiff  
brought

A Chartist pike. You should have  
seen him wince

As from a venomous thing: he thought  
himself

A mark for all, and shudder'd, lest a cry  
Should break his sleep by night, and

his nice eyes  
Should see the raw mechanic's bloody

thumbs  
Sweat on his blazon'd chairs; but, sir,

you know  
That these two parties still divide the

world—  
Of those that want, and those that

have: and still  
The same old sore breaks out from age

to age  
With much the same result. Now I

myself,  
A Tory to the quick, was as a boy

Destructive, when I had not what I  
would.

I was at school—a college in the  
South:

There lived a flayflint near; we stole  
his fruit,

His hens, his eggs; but there was law  
for us:

We paid in person. He had a sow, sir.  
She,

With meditative grunts of much con-  
tent,

Lay great with pig, wallowing in sun  
and mud.

By night we dragg'd her to the college  
tower

From her warm bed, and up the cork-  
screw stair

With hand and rope we haled the  
groaning sow,

And on the leads we kept her till she  
pigg'd.

Large range of prospect had the mother  
sow,

And but for daily loss of one she  
loved,

As one by one we took them—but for  
this—

As never sow was higher in this  
world—

Might have been happy: but what lot  
is pure?

We took them all, till she was left  
alone

Upon her tower, the Niobe of swine,  
And so return'd unfarrow'd to her sty.

*John*. They found you out?  
*James*. Not they.

*John*. Well—after all—  
What know we of the secret of a man?

His nerves were wrong. What ails us,  
who are sound,

That we should mimic this raw fool  
the world,

Which charts us all in its coarse blacks  
or whites,

As ruthless as a baby with a worm,  
As cruel as a schoolboy ere he grows  
To Pity—more from ignorance than  
will.

But put your best foot forward, or I  
fear

That we shall miss the mail: and here  
it comes

With five at top: as quaint a four-in-  
hand

As you shall see—three pycbalds and  
a roan.

#### EDWIN MORRIS; OR, THE LAKE.

O ME, my pleasant rambles by the  
lake,

My sweet, wild, fresh three quarters of  
a year,

My one Oasis in the dust and drouth  
Of city life! I was a sketcher then:

See here, my doing: curves of moun-  
tain, bridge,

Boat, island, ruins of a castle, built  
When men knew how to build, upon a  
rock,

With turrets lichen-gilded like a rock:  
And here, new-comers in an ancient  
hold,

New-comers from the Mersey, million-  
aires,

Here lived the Hills—a Tudor-chim-  
nied bulk

Of mellow brickwork on an isle of  
bowers.

O me, my pleasant rambles by the  
lake

With Edwin Morris and with Edward  
Bull

The curate; he was fatter than his  
cure.

But Edwin Morris, he that knew the  
names,

Long learned names of agaric, moss  
and fern,

Who forged a thousand theories of the  
rocks,

Who taught me how to skate, to row,  
to swim,

Who read me rhymes elaborately  
good,

His own—I call'd him Crichton, for he  
seem'd

All-perfect, finish'd to the finger nail.

And once I ask'd him of his early  
life,

And his first passion; and he answer'd  
me;

And well his words became him: was  
he not

A full-cell'd honeycomb of eloquence  
Stored from all flowers? Poet-like he  
spoke.

“My love for Nature is as old as I;  
But thirty moons, one honeymoon to  
that,

And three rich sennights more, my  
love for her.

My love for Nature and my love for her,  
Of different ages, like twin-sisters  
grew,

Twin-sisters differently beautiful.  
To some full music rose and sank the  
sun,

And some full music seem'd to move  
and change

With all the varied changes of the  
dark,

And either twilight and the day be-  
tween

For daily hope fulfill'd, to rise again  
Revolving toward fulfilment, made it  
sweet

To walk, to sit, to sleep, to wake, to  
breathe.”

Or this or something like to this he  
spoke.

Then said the fat-faced curate, Ed-  
ward Bull,

“I take it, God made the woman  
for the man,

And for the good and increase of the  
world.

A pretty face is well, and this is well,  
To have a dame indoors, that trims us  
up,

And keeps us tight; but these unreal  
ways

Seem but the theme of writers, and in-  
deed

Worn threadbare. Man is made of  
solid stuff.

I say, God made the woman for the  
man,

And for the good and increase of the  
world.”

“Parson,” said I, “you pitch the  
pipe too low:

But I have sudden touches, and can  
run

My faith beyond my practice into his:  
Tho' if, in dancing after Letty Hill,

I do not hear the bells upon my cap,  
I scarce have other music: yet say on.

What should one give to light on such  
a dream?”

I ask'd him half-sardonically.

“Give?

Give all thou art,” he answer'd, and a  
light

Of laughter dimpled in his swarthy  
cheek;

“I would have hid her needle in my  
heart,

To save her little finger from a scratch  
No deeper than the skin: my ears  
could hear

Her lightest breaths: her least remark  
was worth

The experience of the wise. I went  
and came;

Her voice fled always thro' the sum-  
mer land;

I spoke her name alone. Thrice-happy  
days!

The flower of each, those moments  
when we met,

The crown of all, we met to part no more."

Were not his words delicious, I a beast

To take them as I did? but something jar'd;

Whether he spoke too largely; that there seem'd

A touch of something false, some self-conceit,

Or over-smoothness: howsoe'er it was, He scarcely hit my humor, and I said:

"Friend Edwin, do not think yourself alone

Of all men happy. Shall not Love to me,

As in the Latin song I learnt at school, Sneeze out a full God-bless-you right and left?

But you can talk: yours is a kindly vein:

I have, I think,—Heaven knows—as much within;

Have, or should have, but for a thought or two,

That like a purple beech among the greens

Looks out of place: 'tis from no want in her:

It is my shyness, or my self

Or something of a wayward modern mind

Dissecting passion. Time will set me right."

So spoke I knowing not the things that were.

Then said the fat-faced curate, Edward Bull:

"God made the woman for the use of man,

And for the good and increase of the world."

And I and Edwin laugh'd; and now we paused

About the windings of the marge to hear

The soft wind blowing over meadowy holms

And alders, garden-isles; and now we left

The clerk behind us, I and he, and ran

By ripply shallows of the lipping lake, Delighted with the freshness and the sound,

But, when the bracken rusted on their crags,

My suit had wither'd, nipt to death by him

That was a God, and is a lawyer's clerk, The rentroll Cupid of our rainy isles.

'Tis true, we met; one hour I had, no more:

She sent a note, the seal an *Elle vous suit*,

The close "Your Letty, only yours;" and this

Thrice underscored. The friendly mist of morn

Clung to the lake. I boated over, ran My craft aground, and heard with beating heart

The Sweet-Gale rustle round the shelving keel;

And out I slept, and up I crept: she moved,

Like Proserpine in Enna, gathering flowers:

Then low and sweet I whistled thrice; and she,

She turn'd, we closed, we kiss'd, swore faith, I breathed

In some new planet: a silent cousin stole

Upon us and departed: "Leave," she cried,

"O leave me!" "Never, dearest, never: here

I brave the worst:" and while we stood like fools

Embracing, all at once a score of pugs And poodles yell'd within, and out they came

Trustees and Aunts and Uncles.

"What, with him!

Go" (shrill'd the cotton-spinning chorus); "him!"

I choked. Again they shriek'd the burden—"him!"

Again with hands of wild rejection "Go!"

Girl, get you in!" She went—and in one month

They wedded her to sixty thousand pounds,

To lands in Kent and messuages in York,

And slight Sir Robert with his watery smile

And educated whisker. But for me, They set an ancient creditor to work:

It seems I broke a close with force and arms:

There came a mystic token from the king

To greet the sheriff, needless courtesy! I read, and fled by night, and flying turn'd:

Her taper glimmer'd in the lake below:

I turn'd once more, close-button'd to the storm;

So left the place, left Edwin, nor have seen

Him since, nor heard of her, nor cared to hear.

Nor cared to hear? perhaps: yet long ago

I have pardon'd little Letty; not indeed,

It may be, for her own dear sake but. She seems a part of those fresh days to me;

For in the dust and drouth of London life

She moves among my visions of the lake,

While the prime swallow dips his wing, or then

While the gold-lily blows, and over-  
head  
The light cloud smoulders on the sum-  
mer crag.

## ST. SIMEON STYLITES.

ALTHO' I be the basest of mankind,  
From scalp to sole one slough and  
crust of sin,

Unfit for earth, unfit for heaven, scarce  
meet

For troops of devils, mad with blas-  
phemy,

I will not cease to grasp the hope I  
hold

Of saintdom, and to clamor, mourn  
and sob,

Battering the gates of heaven with  
storms of prayer,

Have mercy, Lord, and take away my  
sin.

Let this avail, just, dreadful, mighty  
God,

This not be all in vain, that thrice ten  
years,

Thrice multiplied by superhuman  
pangs,

In hungers and in thirsts, fevers and  
cold,

In coughs, aches, stitches, ulcerous  
throbs and cramps,

A sign betwixt the meadow and the  
cloud,

Patient on this tall pillar I have borne  
Rain, wind, frost, heat, hail, damp, and  
sleet, and snow ;

And I had hoped that ere this period  
closed

Thou wouldst have caught me up into  
thy rest,

Denying not these weather-beaten  
limbs

The meed of saints, the white robe and  
the palm.

O take the meaning, Lord : I do not  
breathe,

Not whisper, any murmur of complaint.  
Pain heap'd ten-hundred-fold, to this,

were still

Less burden, by ten-hundred-fold, to  
bear,

Than were those lead-like tons of sin,  
that crush'd

My spirit flat before thee.

O Lord, Lord,

Thou knowest I bore this better at the  
first,

For I was strong and hale of body then ;  
And tho' my teeth, which now are  
dropt away,

Would chatter with the cold, and all  
my beard

Was tagg'd with icy fringes in the  
moon,

I drown'd the whoopings of the owl  
with sound

Of pious hymns and psalms, and some-  
times saw

An angel stand and watch me, as I sang.

Now am I feeble grown ; my end  
draws nigh ;

I hope my end draws nigh : half deaf I  
am,

So that I scarce can hear the people  
hum

About the column's base, and almost  
blind,

And scarce can recognize the fields I  
know ;

And both my thighs are rotted with  
the dew ;

Yet cease I not to clamor and to cry,  
While my stiff spine can hold my

weary head,

Till all my limbs drop piecemeal from  
the stone,

Have mercy, mercy : take away my  
sin.

O Jesus, if thou wilt not save my  
soul,

Who may be saved ? who is it may be  
saved ?

Who may be made a saint, if I fail  
here ?

Show me the man hath suffer'd more  
than I.

For did not all thy martyrs die one  
death ?

For either they were stoned, or cruci-  
fied,

Or burn'd in fire, or boil'd in oil, or  
sawn

In twain beneath the ribs ; but I die  
here

To-day, and whole years long, a life of  
death.

Bear witness, if I could have found a  
way

(And heedfully I sifted all my thought)  
More slowly-painful to subdue this

home

Of sin, my flesh, which I despise and  
hate,

I had not stinted practice, O my God.

For not alone this pillar-punishment,  
Not this alone I bore : but while I lived

In the white convent down the valley  
there,

For many weeks about my loins I wore  
The rope that haled the buckets from  
the well,

Twisted as tight as I could knot the  
noose ;

And spake not of it to a single soul,  
Until the ulcer, eating thro' my skin,

Betray'd my secret penance, so that  
all

My brethren marvell'd greatly. More  
than this

I bore, whereof, O God, thou knowest  
all.

Three winters, that my soul might  
grow to thee,

I lived up there on yonder mountain  
side.

My right leg chain'd into the crag, I  
lay

Pent in a roofless close of ragged  
stones ;

Inswathed sometimes in wandering  
mist, and twice  
Black'd with thy branding thunder,  
and sometimes  
Sucking the damps for drink, and eat-  
ing not,  
Except the spare chance-gift of those  
that came  
To touch my body and be heal'd, and  
live :  
And they say then that I work'd  
miracles,  
Whereof my fame is loud amongst  
mankind,  
Cured lameness, palsies, cancers.  
Thou, O God,  
Knowest alone whether this was or  
no.

Have mercy, mercy ; cover all my sin.  
Then, that I might be more alone  
with thee,  
Three years I lived upon a pillar, high  
Six cubits, and three years on one of  
twelve ;  
And twice three years I crouch'd on  
one that rose  
Twenty by measure ; last of all, I grew  
Twice ten long weary years to this,  
That numbers forty cubits from the  
soil.

I think that I have borne as much as  
this—  
Or else I dream—and for so long a time,  
If I may measure time by yon slow  
light,  
And this high dial, which my sorrow  
crowns—  
So much—even so.

And yet I know not well,  
For that the evil ones come here, and  
say,  
“ Fall down, O Simeon : thou hast  
suffer'd long  
For ages and for ages ! ” then they  
prate  
Of penances I cannot have gone thro',  
Perplexing me with lies ; and oft I  
fall,  
Maybe for months, in such blind  
lethargies,  
That Heaven, and Earth, and Time  
are choked.

But yet  
Bethink thee, Lord, while thou and all  
the saints  
Enjoy themselves in heaven, and men  
on earth  
House in the shade of comfortable  
roofs,  
Sit with their wives by fires, eat whole-  
some food,  
And wear warm clothes, and even  
beasts have stalls,  
I, 'tween the spring and downfall of  
the light,  
Bow down one thousand and two  
hundred times,  
To Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the  
Saints ;  
Or in the night, after a little sleep,

I wake : the chill stars sparkle ; I am  
wet  
With drenching dews, or stiff with  
crackling frost.  
I wear an undress'd goatskin on my  
back ;  
A grazing iron collar grinds my neck ;  
And in my weak, lean arms I lift the  
cross,  
And strive and wrestle with thee till I  
die :  
O mercy, mercy ! wash away my sin.  
O Lord, thou knowest what a man I  
am ;  
A sinful man, conceived and born in  
sin ;  
'Tis their own doing ; this is none of  
mine ;  
Lay it not to me. Am I to blame for  
this,  
That here come those that worship  
me ? Ha ! ha !  
They think that I am somewhat. What  
am I ?  
The silly people take me for a saint,  
And bring me offerings of fruit and  
flowers :  
And I, in truth (thou wilt bear witness  
here)  
Have all in all endured as much, and  
more  
Than many just and hoïy men, whose  
names  
Are register'd and calendar'd for  
saints.  
Good people, you do ill to kneel to  
me.  
What is it I can have done to merit  
this ?  
I am a sinner viler than you all.  
It may be I have wrought some mira-  
cles,  
And cured some halt and maim'd ; but  
what of that ?  
It may be, no one, even among the  
saints,  
May match his pains with mine ; but  
what of that ?  
Yet do not rise ; for you may look on  
me,  
And in your looking you may kneel to  
God.  
Speak ! is there any of you halt or  
maim'd ?  
I think you know I have some power  
with Heaven  
From my long penance : let him speak  
his wish.  
Yes, I can heal him. Power goes  
forth from me.  
They say that they are heal'd. Ah.  
hark ! they shout  
“ St. Simeon Stylites.” Why, if so,  
God reaps a harvest in me. O my soul,  
God reaps a harvest in thee. If this be,  
Can I work miracles and not be saved ?  
This is not told of any. They were  
saints.  
It cannot be but that I shall be saved  
Yea, crown'd a saint. They shout

"Behold a saint!"

And lower voices saint me from above.  
 Courage, St. Simeon! This dull chrysalis  
 Cracks into shining wings, and hope  
 ere death  
 Spreads more and more and more, that  
 God hath now  
 Sponged and made blank of crimeful  
 record all  
 My mortal archives.

O my sons, my sons,  
 I, Simeon of the pillar, by surname  
 Stylites, among men; I, Simeon,  
 The watcher on the column till the end;  
 I, Simeon, whose brain the sunshine  
 bakes;  
 I, whose bald brows in silent hours be-  
 come  
 Unnaturally hoar with rime, do now  
 From my high nest of penance here  
 proclaim  
 That Pontius and Iscariot by my side  
 Show'd like fair seraphs. On the coals  
 I lay,

A vessel full of sin: all hell beneath  
 Made me boil over. Devils pluck'd my  
 sleeve;  
 Abaddon and Asmodeus caught at me.  
 I smote them with the cross; they  
 swarm'd again.

In bed like monstrous apes they  
 crush'd my chest:  
 They flapp'd my light out as I read: I  
 saw

Their faces grow between me and my  
 book;

With colt-like whinny and with hog-  
 gish whine

They burst my prayer. Yet this way  
 was left.

And by this way I 'scaped them. Mor-  
 tify

Your flesh, like me, with scourges and  
 with thorns;

Smite, shrink not, spare not. If it  
 may be, fast

Whole Lents, and pray. I hardly,  
 with slow steps,

With slow, faint steps, and much ex-  
 ceeding pain,

Have scrambled past those pits of fire,  
 that still

Sing in mine ears. But yield not me  
 the praise:

God only thro' his bounty hath thought  
 fit,

Among the powers and princes of this  
 world,

To make me an example to mankind,  
 Which few can reach to. Yet I do not  
 say

But that a time may come—yea, even  
 now,

Now, now, his footsteps smite the  
 threshold stairs

Of life—I say, that time is at the doors  
 When you may worship me without  
 reproach;

For I will leave my relics in your land,

And you may carve a shrine about my  
 dust,  
 And burn a fragrant lamp before my  
 bones,  
 When I am gather'd to the glorious  
 saints.

While I spake then, a sting of  
 shrewdest pain  
 Ran shrivelling thro' me, and a cloud-  
 like change,

In passing, with a grosser film made  
 thick

These heavy, horny eyes. The end!  
 the end!

Surely the end! What's here? a shape,  
 a shade,

A flash of light. Is that the angel  
 there

That holds a crown? Come, blessed  
 brother, come.

I know thy glittering face. I waited  
 long;

My brows are ready. What! deny it  
 now?

Nay, draw, draw, draw nigh. So I  
 clutch it. Christ!

'Tis gone: 'tis here again; the crown!  
 the crown!

So now 'tis fitted on and grows to me,  
 And from it melt the dews of Paradise,

Sweet! sweet! spikenard, and balm,  
 and frankincense.

Ah! let me not be fool'd, sweet saints:  
 I trust

That I am whole, and clean, and meet  
 for Heaven.

Speak, if there be a priest, a man of  
 God,

Among you there, and let him pres-  
 ently

Approach, and lean a ladder on the  
 shaft,

And climbing up into my airy home,  
 Deliver me the blessed sacrament;

For by the warning of the Holy Ghost,  
 I prophesy that I shall die to night,

A quarter before twelve.

But thou, O Lord,

Aid all this foolish people; let them  
 take

Example, pattern: lead them to thy  
 light.

#### THE TALKING OAK.

ONCE more the gate behind me falls;  
 Once more before my face

I see the moulder'd Abbey-walls,  
 That stand within the chace.

Beyond the lodge the city lies,  
 Beneath its drift of smoke;

And ah! with what delighted eyes  
 I turn to yonder oak.

For when my passion first began,  
 Ere that, which in me burn'd

The love, that makes me thrice a man,  
 Could hope itself return'd;

To yonder oak within the field  
 I spoke without restraint.

And with a larger faith appeal'd  
Than Papist unto Saint.  
For oft I talk'd with him apart,  
And told him of my choice,  
Until he plagiarized a heart,  
And answer'd with a voice.  
Tho' what he whisper'd, under Heaven  
None else could understand ;  
I found him garrulously given,  
A babbler in the land.  
But since I heard him make reply  
Is many a weary hour ;  
'Twere well to question him, and try  
If yet he keeps the power.  
Hail, hidden to the knees in fern,  
Broad Oak of Summer-chace,  
Whose topmost branches can discern  
The roofs of Summer-place !  
Say thou, whereon I carved her name,  
If ever maid or spouse,  
As fair as my Olivia, came  
To rest beneath thy boughs.—  
"O Walter, I have shelter'd here  
Whatever maiden grace  
The good old Summers, year by year  
Made ripe in Summer-chace :  
"Old Summers, when the monk was  
fat,  
And, issuing shorn and sleek,  
Would twist his girdle tight, and pat  
The girls upon the cheek,  
"Ere yet, in scorn of Peter's-pence,  
And number'd bead, and shrift,  
Bluff Harry broke into the spence,  
And turn'd the cows adrift :  
"And I have seen some score of those  
Fresh faces, that would thrive  
When his man-minded offset rose  
To chase the deer at five ;  
"And all that from the town would  
stroll,  
Till that wild wind made work  
In which the gloomy brewer's soul  
Went by me, like a stork :  
"The slight she-slips of loyal blood,  
And others, passing praise,  
Strait-laced, but all-too-full in bud  
For puritanic stays :  
"And I have shadow'd many a group  
Of beauties, that were born  
In teacup-times of hood and hoop,  
Or while the patch was worn ;  
"And, leg and arm with love-knots  
gay,  
About me leap'd and laugh'd  
The modest Cupid of the day,  
And shrill'd his tinsel shaft.  
"I swear (and else may insects prick  
Each leaf into a gall)  
This girl, for whom your heart is sick,  
Is three times worth them all ;  
"For those and theirs, by Nature's law,  
Have faded long ago ;  
But in these latter springs I saw  
Your own Olivia blow,

"From when she gamboll'd on the  
greens,  
A baby-germ, to when  
The maiden blossoms of her teens  
Could number five from ten.  
"I swear, by leaf, and wind, and rain,  
(And hear me with thine ears,)   
That, tho' I circle in the grain  
Five hundred rings of years.  
"Yet, since I first could cast a shade,  
Did never creature pass  
So slightly, musically made,  
So light upon the grass :  
"For as to fairies, that will flit  
To make the greensward fresh,  
I hold them exquisitely knit,  
But far too spare of flesh."  
O, hide thy knotted knees in fern,  
And overlook the chace ;  
And from thy topmost branch discern  
The roofs of Summer-place.  
But thou, whereon I carved her name,  
That oft hast heard my vows,  
Declare when last Olivia came  
To sport beneath thy boughs.  
"O yesterday, you know, the fair  
Was holden at the town ;  
His father left his good arm-chair,  
And rode his hunter down.  
"And with him Albert came on his,  
I look'd at him with joy :  
As cowslip unto oxlip is,  
So seems she to the boy.  
"An hour had past—and, sitting  
straight  
Within the low-wheel'd chaise,  
Her mother trundled to the gate  
Behind the dappled grays.  
"But, as for her, she stay'd at home,  
And on the roof she went,  
And down the way you used to come,  
She look'd with discontent.  
"She left the novel half-uncut  
Upon the rosewood shelf ;  
She left the new piano shut :  
She could not please herself.  
"Then ran she, gamesome as the colt,  
And livelier than a lark  
She sent her voice thro' all the holt  
Before her, and the park.  
"A light wind chased her on the wing  
And in the chase grew wild,  
As close as might be would be cling  
About the darling child :  
"But light as any wind that blows  
So fleetly did she stir,  
The flower, she touch'd on, dipt and  
rose,  
And turn'd to look at her.  
"And here she came, and round me  
play'd,  
And sang to me the whole  
Of those three stanzas that you made  
About my 'giant bole ;'

"And in a fit of frolic mirth  
She strove to span my waist :  
Alas, I was so broad of girth,  
I could not be embraced.

"I wish'd myself the fair young beech  
That here beside me stands,  
That round me, clasping each in each,  
She might have lock'd her hands.

"Yet seem'd the pressure thrice as  
sweet  
As woodbine's fragile hold,  
Or when I feel about my feet  
The berried briony fold."

O muffle round thy knees with fern,  
And shadow Summer-chace !  
Long may thy topmost branch discern  
The roofs of Summer-place !

But tell me, did she read the name  
I carved with many vows  
When last with throbbing heart I came  
To rest beneath thy boughs ?

"O yes, she wander'd round and round  
These knotted knees of mine,  
And found, and kiss'd the name she  
found,

And sweetly murmur'd thine.

"A teardrop trembled from its source  
And down my surface crept.  
My sense of touch is something coarse,  
But I believe she wept.

"Then flush'd her cheek with rosy light,  
She glanced across the plain ;  
But not a creature was in sight :  
She kiss'd me once again.

"Her kisses were so close and kind,  
That, trust me on my word,  
Hard wood I am, and wrinkled rind,  
But yet my sap was stir'd :

"And even into my inmost ring  
A pleasure I discern'd,  
Like those blind motions of the Spring,  
That show the year is turn'd.

"Thrice-happy he that may caress  
The ringle's waving balm—  
The cushions of whose touch may press  
The maiden's tender palm.

"I, rooted here among the groves,  
But languidly adjust  
My vapid vegetable loves  
With anthers and with dust :

"For ah ! my friend, the days were  
brief  
Whereof the poets talk,  
When that, which breathes within the  
leaf,  
Could slip its bark and walk.

"But could I, as in times foregone,  
From spray, and branch, and stem,  
Have suck'd and gather'd into one  
The life that spreads in them,

"She had not found me so remiss ;  
But lightly issuing thro',  
I would have paid her kiss for kiss,  
With usury thereto."

O flourish high, with leafy towers,  
And overlook the lea,  
Pursue thy loves among the bowers,  
But leave thou mine to me.

O flourish, hidden deep in fern,  
Old oak, I love thee well ;  
A thousand thanks for what I learn  
And what remains to tell.

"Tis little more : the day was warm  
At last, tired out with play,  
She sank her head upon her arm  
And at my feet she lay.

"Her eyelids dropp'd their silken  
eaves.

I breathed upon her eyes  
Thro' all the summer of my leaves  
A welcome mix'd with sighs.

"I took the swarming sound of life—  
The music from the town—  
The murmurs of the drum and fife  
And lull'd them in my own.

"Sometimes I let a sunbeam slip,  
To light her shaded eye ;  
A second flutter'd round her lip  
Like a golden butterfly ;

"A third would glimmer on her neck  
To make the necklace shine ;  
Another slid, a sunny fleck,  
From head to ankle fine.

"Then close and dark my arms  
spread,  
And shadow'd all her rest—  
Dropt dew upon her golden head,  
An acorn in her breast.

"But in a pet she started up,  
And pluck'd it out, and drew  
My little oakling from the cup,  
And flung him in the dew :

"And yet it was a graceful gift—  
I felt a pang within  
As when I see the woodman lift  
His axe to slay my kin.

"I shook him down because he was  
The finest on the tree.  
He lies beside thee on the grass,  
O kiss him once for me.

"O kiss him twice and thrice for me,  
That have no lips to kiss,  
For never yet was oak on lea  
Shall grow so fair as this."

Step deeper yet in herb and fern,  
Look further thro' the chace,  
Spread upward till thy boughs discern  
The front of Summer-place.

This fruit of thine by Love is blest,  
That but a moment lay  
Where fairer fruit of Love may rest  
Some happy future day.

I kiss it twice, I kiss it thrice,  
The warmth it thence shall win  
To ripen life may magnetize  
The baby-oak within.

But thou, while kingdoms overset  
Or lapse from hand to hand,

Thy leaf shall never fail, nor yet  
Thine acorn in the land.  
May never saw dismember thee,  
Nor wielded axe disjoint,  
That art the fairest-spoken tree  
From here to Lizard-point.  
O rock upon thy towery top  
All throats that gurgle sweet !  
All starry culmination drop  
Balm-dews to bathe thy feet !  
All grass of silky feather grow—  
And while he sinks or swells  
The full south breeze around thee blow  
The sound of minster bells.  
The fat earth feed thy branchy root,  
That under deeply strikes !  
The northern morning o'er thee shoot,  
High up, in silver spikes !  
Nor ever lightning char thy grain,  
But, rolling as in sleep,  
Low thunders bring the mellow rain,  
That makes thee broad and deep !  
And hear me swear a solemn oath,  
That only by thy side  
Will I to Olive plight my troth,  
And gain her for my bride.  
And when my marriage-morn may fall,  
She, Dryad-like, shall wear  
Alternate leaf and acorn-ball  
In wreath about her hair.  
And I will work in prose and rhyme,  
And praise thee more in both  
Than bard has honor'd beech or lime,  
Or that Thessalian growth,  
In which the swarthy ringdove sat,  
And mystic sentence spoke ;  
And more than England honors that,  
Thy famous brother-oak,  
Wherein the younger Charles abode  
Till all the paths were dim,  
And far below the Roundhead rode,  
And humm'd a surly hymn.

LOVE AND DUTY.

OF love that never found his earthly  
close,  
What sequel? Streaming eyes and  
breaking hearts ?  
Or all the same as if he had not been ?  
Not so. Shall Error in the round of  
time  
Still father Truth? O shall the brag-  
gart shout  
For some blind glimpse of freedom  
work itself  
Thro' madness, hated by the wise, to  
law  
System and empire? Sin itself be  
found  
The cloudy porch oft opening on the  
Sun?  
And only he, this wonder, dead, be-  
come  
Mere highway dust? or year by year  
alone

Sit brooding in the ruins of a life,  
Nightmare of youth, the spectre of  
himself?  
If this were thus, if this, indeed,  
were all,  
Better the narrow brain, the stony  
heart,  
The staring eye glazed o'er with sap-  
less days,  
The long mechanic paces to and fro  
The set gray life, and apathetic end.  
But am I not the nobler thro' thy love?  
O three times less unworthy ! likewise  
thou  
Art more thro' Love, and greater than  
thy years.  
The Sun will run his orbit, and the  
Moon  
Her circle. Wait, and Love himself  
will bring  
The drooping flower of knowledge  
changed to fruit  
Of wisdom. Wait : my faith is large  
in Time,  
And that which shapes it to some per-  
fect end.  
Will some one say, Then why not ill  
for good?  
Why took ye not your pastime? To  
that man  
My work shall answer, since I knew  
the right  
And did it ; for a man is not as God,  
But then most Godlike being most a  
man.  
— So let me think 'tis well for thee  
and me—  
Ill-fated that I am, what lot is mine  
Whose foresight preaches peace, my  
heart so slow  
To feel it ! For how hard it seem'd to  
me,  
When eyes, love-languid thro' half-  
tears, would dwell  
One earnest, earnest moment upon  
mine,  
Then not to dare to see ! when thy low  
voice,  
Faltering, would break its syllables, to  
keep  
My own full-tuned,— hold passion in a  
leash,  
And not leap forth and fall about thy  
neck,  
And on thy bosom, (deep-desired re-  
lief !)  
Rain out the heavy mist of tears, that  
weigh'd  
Upon my brain, my senses and my  
soul !  
For love himself took part against  
himself  
To warn us off, and Duty loved of  
Love—  
O this world's curse,— beloved but  
hated— came  
Like Death betwixt thy dear embrace  
and mine,  
And crying, " Who is this? behold thy  
bride,"

She push'd me from thee.

If the sense is hard  
To alien ears, I did not speak to these—  
No, not to thee, but to thyself in me :  
Hard is my doom and thine : thou  
knowest it all.

Could Love part thus ? was it not  
well to speak,  
To have spoken once ? It could not  
but be well.

The slow sweet hours that bring us all  
things good,

The slow sad hours that bring us all  
things ill,

And all good things from evil, brought  
the night

In which we sat together and alone,  
And to the want, that hollow'd all the  
heart,

Gave utterance by the yearning of an  
eye,

That burn'd upon its object thro' such  
tears

As flow but once a life.

The trance gave way  
To those caresses, when a hundred  
times

In that last kiss, which never was the  
last,

Farewell, like endless welcome, lived  
and died.

Then follow'd counsel, comfort, and  
the words

That make a man feel strong in speak-  
ing truth ;

Till now the dark was worn, and over-  
head

The lights of sunset and of sunrise  
mix'd

In that brief night ; the summer night,  
that paused

Among her stars to hear us ; stars that  
hung

Love-charm'd to listen : all the wheels  
of Time

Spun round in station, but the end  
had come.

O then like those, who clench their  
nerves to rush

Upon their dissolution, we two rose,  
There—closing like an individual  
life—

In one wild cry of passion and of pain,  
Like bitter accusation ev'n to death,

Caught up the whole of love and  
utter'd it,

And bade adieu for ever.

Live—yet live—  
Shall sharpest pathos blight us, know-  
ing all

Life needs for life is possible to will—  
Live happy ; tend thy flowers ; be  
tended by

My blessing ! Should my Shadow cross  
thy thoughts

Too sadly for their peace, remand it  
thou

For calmer hours to Memory's darkest  
hold,

If not to be forgotten—not at once—

Not all forgotten. Should it cross thy  
dreams,

O might it come like one that looks  
content,

With quiet eyes unfaithful to the  
truth,

And point thee forward to a distant  
light,

Or seem to lift a burden from thy  
heart

And leave thee freer, till thou wake re-  
fresh'd,

Then when the first low matin-chirp  
hath grown

Full quire, and morning driv'n her  
plough of pearl

Far furrowing into light the mounded  
rack,

Beyond the fair green field and eastern  
sea.

### THE GOLDEN YEAR.

WELL, you shall have that song which  
Leonard wrote :

It was last summer on a tour in Wales:  
Old James was with me : we that day

had been  
Up Snowdon ; and I wish'd for Leon-  
ard there,

And found him in Llanberis : then we  
crost

Between the lakes, and clamber'd half  
way up

The counter side ; and that same song  
of his

He told me ; for I banter'd him, and  
swore

They said he lived shut up within him-  
self,

A tongue-tied Poet in his feverous  
days,

That, setting the *how much* before the  
*how*,

Cry, like the daughters of the horse-  
leech. " Give,

Cram us with all," but count not me  
the herd !

To which " They call me what they  
will," he said :

" But I was born too late : the fair  
new forms,

That float about the threshold of an  
age,

Like truths of Science waiting to be  
caught—

Catch me who can, and make the catch-  
er crown'd—

Are taken by the forelock. Let it  
be.

But if you care indeed to listen, hear  
These measured words, my work of  
yesternorn.

" We sleep and wake and sleep, but  
all things move ;

The Sun flies forward to his brother  
Sun ;

The dark Earth follows wheel'd in her  
ellipse ;

And human things returning on themselves

Move onward, leading up the golden year.

"Ah, tho' the times, when some new thought can bud,

Are but as poets' seasons when they flower,

Yet seas, that daily gain upon the shore,

Have ebb and flow conditioning their inarch,

And slow and sure comes up the golden year.

"When wealth no more shall rest in mounded heaps,

But smit with freer light shall slowly melt

In many streams to fatten lower lands, And light shall spread, and man be liker man

Thro' all the season of the golden year.

"Shall eagles not be eagles? wrens be wrens?

If all the world were falcons, what of that?

The wonder of the eagle were the less, But he not less the eagle. Happy days Roll onward, leading up the golden year.

"Fly, happy happy sails and bear the Press;

Fly happy with the mission of the Cross;

Knit land to land, and blowing havenward

With silks, and fruits, and spices, clear of toll,

Enrich the markets of the golden year.

"But we grow old. Ah! when shall all men's good

Be each man's rule, and universal Peace

Lie like a shaft of light across the land,

And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,

Thro' all the circle of the golden year?"

Thus far he flow'd, and ended; whereupon

"Ah, folly!" in mimic cadence answer'd James—

"Ah, folly! for it lies so far away, Not in our time, nor in our children's time,

'Tis like the second world to us that live;

'Twere all as one to fix our hopes on Heaven

As on this vision of the golden year."

With that he struck his staff against the rocks

And broke it,—James,—you know him,—old, but full

Of force and choler, and firm upon his feet,

And like an oaken stock in winter woods,

O'erfrowny'd with the hoary clematis:

Then added, all in heat:

"What stuff is this!

Old writers push'd the happy season back,—

The more fools they,—we forward: dreamers both:

You most, that in an age, when every hour

Must sweat her sixty minutes to the death,

Live on, God love us, as if the seedsman, rapt

Upon the teeming harvest, should not plunge

His hand into the bag: but well I know That unto him who works, and feels

he works, This same grand year is ever at the doors."

He spoke: and, high above, I heard them blast

The steep slate-quarry, and the great echo flap

And buffet round the hills from bluff to bluff.

ULYSSES.

It little profits that an idle king, By this still hearth, among these barren crags,

Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole

Unequal laws unto a savage race, That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and

know not me I cannot rest from travel: I will drink

Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy'd

Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those

That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when

Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades Vext the dim sea: I am become a

name; For always roaming with a hungry heart

Much have I seen and known; cities of men

And manners, climates, councils, governments,

Myself not least, but honor'd of them all;

And drunk delight of battle with my peers,

Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.

I am a part of all that I have met; Yet all experience is an arch where-

thro' Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades

For ever and for ever when I move. How dull it is to pause, to make an end,

To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!

As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life

Were all too little, and of one to me  
 Little remains: but every hour is  
 saved  
 From that eternal silence, something  
 more,  
 A bringer of new things; and vile it  
 were  
 For some three suns to store and hoard  
 myself,  
 And this gray spirit yearning in de-  
 sire  
 To follow knowledge like a sinking  
 star,  
 Beyond the utmost bound of human  
 thought.  
 This is my son, mine own Tele-  
 machus,  
 To whom I leave the sceptre and the  
 isle—  
 Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil  
 This labor, by slow prudence to make  
 mild  
 A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees  
 Subdue them to the useful and the  
 good.  
 Most blameless is he, centred in the  
 sphere  
 Of common duties, decent not to fail  
 In offices of tenderness, and pay  
 Meet adoration to my household gods,  
 When I am gone. He works his work,  
 I mine.  
 There lies the port: the vessel puffs  
 her sail:  
 There gloom the dark broad seas. My  
 mariners,  
 Souls that have toil'd, and wrought,  
 and thought with me—  
 That ever with a frolic welcome took  
 The thunder and the sunshine, and  
 opposed

Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I  
 are old;  
 Old age hath yet his honor and his  
 toil;  
 Death closes all: but something ere  
 the end,  
 Some work of noble note, may yet be  
 done,  
 Not unbecoming men that strove with  
 Gods.  
 The lights begin to twinkle from the  
 rocks:  
 The long day wanes: the slow moon  
 climbs: the deep  
 Moans round with many voices. Come,  
 my friends,  
 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.  
 Push off, and sitting well in order  
 smite  
 The sounding furrows; for my pur-  
 pose holds  
 To sail beyond the sunset, and the  
 baths  
 Of all the western stars, until I die.  
 It may be that the gulfs will wash us  
 down:  
 It may be we shall touch the Happy  
 Isles,  
 And see the great Achilles, whom we  
 knew.  
 Tho' much is taken, much abides: and  
 tho'  
 We are not now that strength which in  
 old days  
 Moved earth and heaven; that which  
 we are, we are;  
 One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
 Made weak by time and fate, but  
 strong in will  
 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to  
 yield.

## LOCKSLEY HALL.

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn:  
 Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle horn  
 'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call.  
 Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall;  
 Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,  
 And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.  
 Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,  
 Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.  
 Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,  
 Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.  
 Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime  
 With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time;  
 When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed;  
 When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed:  
 When I dint into the future far as human eye could see;  
 Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be.—  
 In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;  
 In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove;  
 In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.  
 Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one as young,  
 And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.  
 And I said, "My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,  
 Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee."  
 On her pallid cheek and forehead came a color and a light,  
 As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern light.  
 And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs—  
 All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—  
 Saying, "I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong;"  
 Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin?" weeping, "I have loved thee long."  
 Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands;  
 Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.  
 Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might;  
 Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.  
 Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,  
 And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fullness of the Spring.  
 Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,  
 And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.  
 O my cousin, shallow-hearted! O my Amy, mine no more!  
 O the dreary, dreary moorland! O the barren, barren shore!  
 Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung,  
 Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue!  
 Is it well to wish thee happy?—having known me—to decline  
 On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine!  
 Yet it shall be: thou shalt lower to his level day by day,  
 What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathize with clay.  
 As the husband is, the wife is: thou art mated with a clown,  
 And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down.  
 He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,  
 Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.  
 What is this? his eyes are heavy: think not they are glazed with wine.  
 Go to him: it is thy duty: kiss him: take his hand in thine.  
 It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought:  
 Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.  
 He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand—  
 Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand!  
 Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,  
 Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.  
 Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth!  
 Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth!  
 Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's rule!  
 Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead of the fool!  
 Well—'tis well that I should bluster!—Hadst thou less unworthy proved  
 Would to God—for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved.  
 Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter fruit?  
 I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at the root.  
 Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years should come  
 As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clanging rookery home.  
 Where is comfort? in division of the records of the mind?  
 Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind?  
 I remember one that perish'd: sweetly did she speak and move:  
 Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.  
 Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore?  
 No—she never loved me truly: love is love for evermore.  
 Comfort? comfort scorn'd of devils! this is truth the poet sings,  
 That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.  
 Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,  
 In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the wall,  
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,  
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never," whisper'd by the phantom years  
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears;  
And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain.  
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow: get thee to thy rest again.  
Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a tender voice will cry.  
'Tis a purer life than thine; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down: my latest rival brings thee rest.  
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due.  
Half is thine and half is his: it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,  
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guides the feelings — she herself was not exempt.  
Truly, she herself had suffer'd" — Perish in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it — lower yet — be happy! wherefore should I care?  
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like these?  
Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to golden keys.  
Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow.  
I have but an angry fancy: what is that which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,  
When the ranks are roll'd in vapor, and the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honor feels,  
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness, I will turn that earlier page.  
Hide me from my deep emotion. O thou wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,  
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,  
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,  
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,  
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men;

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new:  
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,  
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails;  
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew  
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,  
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm;

Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furl'd  
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me dry,  
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint:  
Science moves, but slowly slowly, creeping on from point to point:

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion, creeping nigher,  
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,  
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys,  
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever like a boy's?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,  
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,  
Full of sad experience, moving towards the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-horn,  
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn :

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulder'd string?  
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness ! woman's pleasure, woman's pain  
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain :

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match'd with mine,  
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine —

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some retreat  
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat ;

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-starr'd ; —  
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit — there to wander far away,  
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,  
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,  
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag ;  
Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree —  
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind,  
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have scope and breathing-space ;  
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall dive, and they shall run,  
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the sun ;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,  
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books —

Fool, again the dream, the fancy ! but I know my words are wild,  
But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,  
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains !

Mated with a squalid savage — what to me were sun or clime ?  
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time —

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,  
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon !

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range.  
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day :  
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when life begun :  
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the Sun —

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.  
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall !  
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapor from the margin, blackening over heath andholt,  
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow ;  
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

## GODIVA.

*I waited for the train at Coventry,  
I hung with grooms and porters on the  
bridge,  
To watch the three tall spires; and there  
I shaped*

*The city's ancient legend into this,—*  
Not only we, the latest seed of time,  
New men, that in the flying of a wheel  
Cry down the past, not only we, that  
prate  
Of rights and wrongs, have loved the  
people well,  
And loathed to see them overtax'd;  
but she  
Did more, and underwent, and over-  
came,  
The woman of a thousand summers  
back,  
Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who  
ruled  
In Coventry: for when he laid a tax  
Upon his town, and all the mothers  
brought  
Their children, clamoring, "If we  
pay, we starve!"  
She sought her lord, and found him,  
where he strode  
About the hall, among his dogs, alone,  
His beard a foot before him, and his  
hair  
A yard behind. She told him of their  
tears,  
And pray'd him, "If they pay this  
tax, they starve."  
Whereat he stared, replying, half-  
amazed,  
"You would not let your little finger  
ache  
For such as *these*?"—"But I would  
die," said she.  
He laugh'd, and swore by Peter and by  
Paul:  
Then fillip'd at the diamond in her  
ear;  
"O ay, ay, ay, you talk!"—"Alas!"  
she said.  
"But prove me what it is I would not  
do."  
And from a heart as rough as Esau's  
hand,  
He answer'd, "Ride you naked thro'  
the town,  
And I repeal it;" and nodding, as in  
scorn,  
He parted, with great strides among  
his dogs.  
So left alone, the passions of her  
mind,  
As winds from all the compass shift  
and blow,  
Made war upon each other for an  
hour,  
Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,  
And bade him cry, with sound of trum-  
pet, all  
The hard condition; but that she  
would loose  
The people: therefore, as they loved  
her well,

From then till noon no foot should  
pace the street,  
No eye look down, she passing; but  
that all  
Should keep within, door shut, and  
window barr'd.  
Then fled she to her inmost bower,  
and there  
Unclasp'd the wedded eagles of her  
belt,  
The grim Earl's gift; but ever at a  
breath  
She linger'd, looking like a summer  
moon  
Half-dipt in cloud; anon she shook  
her head,  
And shower'd the rippled ringlets to  
her knee;  
Unclad herself in haste; adown the  
stair  
Stole on; and like a creeping sunbeam,  
slid  
From pillar unto pillar, until she  
reach'd  
The gateway; there she found her  
palfrey trapt  
In purple blazon'd with armorial gold.  
Then she rode forth, clothed on with  
chastity:  
The deep air listen'd round her as she  
rode,  
And all the low wind hardly breathed  
for fear.  
The little wide-mouth'd heads upon  
the spout  
Had cunning eyes to see: the barking  
cur  
Made her cheek flame: her palfrey's  
footfall shot  
Light horrors thro' her pulses: the  
blind walls  
Were full of chinks and holes; and  
overhead  
Fantastic gables, crowding, stared:  
but she  
Not less thro' all bore up, till, last, she  
saw  
The white-flower'd elder-thicket from  
the field  
Gleam thro' the Gothic archways in  
the wall.  
Then she rode back, clothed on with  
chastity:  
And one low churl, compact of thank-  
less earth,  
The fatal byword of all years to  
come,  
Boring a little augur-hole in fear,  
Peep'd—but his eyes, before they had  
their will,  
Were shrivell'd into darkness in his  
head,  
And dropt before him. So the Powers,  
who wait  
On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense mis-  
used;  
And she, that knew not, pass'd: and  
all at once,  
With twelve great shocks of sound, the  
chancelless noon

Was clash'd and hammer'd from a hundred towers.

One after one: but even then she gain'd

Her bower; whence reissuing, robed and crown'd,

To meet her lord, she took the tax away  
And built herself an everlasting name.

## THE TWO VOICES.

A STILL small voice spake unto me,

"Thou art so full of misery,  
Were it not better not to be?"

Then to the still small voice I said:

"Let me not cast in endless shade  
What is so wonderfully made."

To which the voice did urge reply:

"To day I saw the dragon-fly  
Come from the wells where he did lie.

"An inner impulse rent the veil  
Of his old husk: from head to tail  
Came out clear plates of sapphire mail.

"He dried his wings: like gauze they grew:

Thro' crofts and pastures wet with dew  
A living flash of light he flew."

I said, "When first the world began,  
Young Nature thro' five cycles ran,  
And in the sixth she moulded man.

"She gave him mind, the lordliest  
Proportion, and, above the rest,  
Dominion in the head and breast."

Thereto the silent voice replied;

"Self-blinded are you by your pride:  
Look up thro' night: the world is wide.

"This truth within thy mind rehearse,  
That in a boundless universe  
Is boundless better, boundless worse.

"Think you this mould of hopes and fears

Could find no statelier than his peers  
In yonder hundred million spheres?"

It spake, moreover, in my mind:

"Tho' thou were scatter'd to the wind,  
Yet is there plenty of the kind."

Then did my response clearer fall:

"No compound of this earthly ball  
Is like another, all in all."

To which he answer'd scoffingly:

"Good soul! suppose I grant it thee,  
Who'll weep for thy deficiency?"

"Or will one beam be less intense,  
When thy peculiar difference  
Is cancell'd in the world of sense?"

I would have said, "Thou canst not know,"

But my full heart, that work'd below,  
Rain'd thro' my sight its overflow.

Again the voice spake unto me:

"Thou art so steep'd in misery,  
Surely 'twere better not to be.

"Thine anguish will not let thee sleep,  
Nor any train of reason keep:

Thou canst not think, but thou wilt weep."

I said, "The years with change advance:

If I make dark my countenance,  
I shut my life from happier chance.

"Some turn this sickness yet might take,

Ev'n yet." But he: "What drug can make

A wither'd palsy cease to shake?"

I wept, "Tho' I should die, I know  
That all about the thorn will blow  
In tufts of rosy-tinted snow;

"And men, thro' novel spheres of thought

Still moving after truth long sought,  
Will learn new things when I am not."

"Yet," said the secret voice, "some time,

Sooner or later, will gray prime  
Make thy grass hoar with early time.

"Not less swift souls that yearn for light,

Rapt after heaven's starry flight,  
Would sweep the tracts of day and night.

"Not less the bee would range her cells,

The furzy prickles fire the dells,  
The foxglove cluster dappled bells."

I said that "all the years invent;  
Each month is various to present  
The world with some development.

"Were this not well, to bide mine hour,

Tho' watching from a ruin'd tower  
How grows the day of human power?"

"The highest-mounted mind," he said,  
"Still sees the sacred morning spread  
The silent summit overhead.

"Will thirty seasons render plain  
Those lonely lights that still remain,  
Just breaking over land and main?"

"Or make that morn, from his cold crown

And crystal silence creeping down,  
Flood with full daylight glebe and town?

"Forerun thy peers, thy time, and let  
Thy feet, millenniums hence, be set  
In midst of knowledge, dream'd not yet.

"Thou hast not gain'd a real height,  
Nor art thou nearer to the light,  
Because the scale is infinite.

"'Twere better not to breathe or speak,  
Than cry for strength, remaining weak,  
And seem to find, but still to seek.

"Moreover, but to seem to find  
Asks what thou lackest, thought resign'd,

A healthy frame, a quiet mind."

I said, "When I am gone away,  
'He dared not tarry, men will say,  
Doing dishonour to my clay."

"This is more vile," he made reply,  
"To breathe and loathe, to live and  
sigh,

Than once from dread of pain to die.

"Sick art thou—a divided will  
Still heaping on the fear of ill  
The fear of men, a coward still.

"Domen love thee? Art thou so bound  
To men, that how thy name may sound  
Will vex thee lying underground?

"The memory of the wither'd leaf  
In endless time is scarce more brief  
Than of the garner'd Autumn-sheaf.

"Go, vexed Spirit, sleep in trust;  
The right ear, that is filled with dust,  
Hears little of the false or just."

"Hark task, to pluck resolve," I cried,  
"From emptiness and the waste wide  
Of that abyss, or scornful pride!

"Nay—rather yet that I could raise  
One hope that warm'd me in the days  
While still I yearn'd for human praise.

"When, wide in soul and bold of  
tongue,

Among the tents I paused and sung,  
The distant battle flash'd and rung.

"I sung the joyful Pæan clear,  
And, sitting, burnish'd without fear  
The brand, the buckler, and the spear—

"Waiting to strive a happy strife,  
To war with falsehood to the knife,  
And not to lose the good of life—

"Some hidden principle to move,  
To put together, part and prove,  
And mete the bounds of hate and love—

"As far as might be, to carve out  
Free space for every human doubt,  
That the whole mind might orb about—

"To search thro' all I felt or saw,  
The springs of life, the depths of awe,  
And reach the law within the law:

"At least, not rotting like a weed,  
But, having sown some generous seed,  
Fruitful of further thought and deed,

"To pass, when Life her light with-  
draws,

Not void of righteous self-applause,  
Nor in a merely selfish cause—

"In some good cause, not in mine own,  
To perish, wept for, honor'd, known,  
And like a warrior overthrown;

"Whose eyes are dim with glorious  
tears,

When, soil'd with noble dust, he hears  
His country's war-song thrill his ears:

"Then dying of a mortal stroke,  
What time the foeman's line is broke,  
And all the war is roll'd in smoke."

"Yea!" said the voice, "thy dream  
was good,

While thou abodest in the bud.

It was the stirring of the blood.

"If nature put not forth her power  
About the opening of the flower,  
Who is it that could live an hour?

"Then comes the check, the change,  
the fall,

Pain rises up, old pleasures pall.  
There is one remedy for all.

"Yet hadst thou, thro' enduring pain,  
Link'd month to month with such a  
chain

Of knitted purport, all were vain.

"Thou hadst not between death and  
birth

Dissolved the riddle of the earth.  
So were thy labour little worth.

"That men with knowledge merely  
play'd,

I told thee—hardly nigher made,  
Tho' scaling slow from grade to grade;

"Much less this dreamer, deaf and  
blind,

Named man, may hope some truth to  
find,

That bears relation to the mind.

"For every worm beneath the moon  
Draws different threads, and late and  
soon

Spins, toiling out his own cocoon.

"Cry, faint not: either Truth is born  
Beyond the polar gleam forlorn,  
Or in the gateways of the morn

"Cry, faint not, climb: the summits  
slope

Beyond the furthest flights of hope,  
Wrapt in dense cloud from base to cope.

"Sometimes a little corner shines,  
As over rainy mist inclines  
A gleaming crag with belts of pines

"I will go forward, sayest thou,

I shall not fail to find her now.

Look up, the fold is on her brow.

"If straight thy track, or if oblique,  
Thou know'st not. Shadows thou dost  
strike,

Embracing cloud, Ixion-like;

"And owning but a little more  
Than beasts, abidest lame and poor,  
Calling thyself a little lower

"Than angels. Cease to wail and  
brawl!

Why inch by inch to darkness crawl?  
There is one remedy for all."

"O dull, one-sided voice," said I.

"Wilt thou make everything a lie,  
To flatter me that I may die?

"I know that age to age succeeds,  
Blowing a noise of tongues and deeds,  
A dust of systems and of creeds.

"I cannot hide that some have striven,  
Achieving calm, to whom was given  
The joy that mixes man with Heaven:

"Who, rowing hard against the stream,  
Saw distant gates of Eden gleam,  
And did not dream it was a dream ;

"But heard, by secret transport led,  
Ev'n in the charnels of the dead,  
The murmur of the fountain-head—

"Which did accomplish their desire,  
Bore and forebore, and did not tire,  
Like Stephen, an unquenched fire.

"He heeded not reviling tones,  
Nor sold his heart to idle moans,  
Tho' cursed and scorn'd, and bruised  
with stones :

"But looking upward, full of grace,  
He pray'd, and from a happy place  
God's glory smote him on the face."

The sullen answer slid betwixt :

"Not that the grounds of hope were  
fix'd,

The elements were kindlier mix'd."

I said, "I toil beneath the curse,  
But, knowing not the universe,  
I fear to slide from bad to worse.

"And that, in seeking to undo  
One riddle, and to find the true,  
I knit a hundred others new :

"Or that this anguish fleeting hence,  
Unmanacled from bonds of sense,  
Be fix'd and froz'n to permanence :

"For I go, weak from suffering here ;  
Naked I go, and void of cheer :  
What is it that I may not fear ?"

"Consider well," the voice replied :

"His face, that two hours since hath  
died ;

Wilt thou find passion, pain or pride ?

"Will he obey when one commands ?  
Or answer should one press his hands ?  
He answers not, nor understands.

"His palms are folded on his breast :  
There is no other thing express'd  
But long disquiet merged in rest.

"His lips are very mild and meek :  
Tho' one should smite him on the  
cheek,

And on the mouth, he will not speak.

"His little daughter, whose sweet face  
He kiss'd, taking his last embrace,  
Becomes dishonor to her race—

"His sons grow up that bear his name,  
Some grow to honor, some to shame,—  
But he is chill to praise or blame.

"He will not hear the north-wind rave,  
Nor, moaning, household shelter crave  
From winter rains that beat his grave.

"High up the vapors fold and swim :  
About him broods the twilight dim :  
The place he knew forgetteth him."

"If all be dark, vague voice," I said,  
"These things are wrapt in doubt and  
dread,

Nor canst thou show the dead are dead."

"The sap dries up : the plant declines.  
A deeper tale my heart divines.  
Know I not Death ? the outward  
signs ?

"I found him when my years were  
few ;

A shadow on the graves I knew,  
And darkness in the village yew.

"From grave to grave the shadow  
crept :

In her still place the morning wept :  
Touch'd by his feet the daisy slept.

"The simple senses crown'd his head :  
'Omega ! thou art Lord,' they said,  
'We find no motion in the dead.'

"Why, if man rot in dreamless ease,  
Should that plain fact, as taught by  
these,

Not make him sure that he shall cease ?

"Who forged that other influence,  
That heat of inward evidence,  
By which he doubts against the sense ?

"He owns the fatal gift of eyes,  
That read his spirit blindly wise,  
Not simple as a thing that dies.

"Here sits he shaping wings to fly :  
His heart forebodes a mystery :  
He names the name Eternity.

"That type of Perfect in his mind  
In Nature can he nowhere find.  
He sows himself on every wind.

"He seems to hear a Heavenly Friend,  
And thro' thick veils to apprehend  
A labor working to an end.

"The end and the beginning vex  
His reason : many things perplex  
With motions, checks, and counter-  
checks.

"He knows a baseness in his blood  
At such strange war with something  
good,

He may not do the thing he would.

"Heaven opens inward, chasms yawn,  
Vast images in glimmering dawn,  
Half-shown, are broken and withdrawn.

"Ah ! sure within him and without,  
Could his dark wisdom find it out,  
There must be answer to his doubt.

"But thou canst answer not again.  
With thine own weapon art thou slain,  
Or thou wilt answer but in vain.

"The doubt would rest, I dare not  
solve.

In the same circle we revolve.  
Assurance only breeds resolve."

As when a billow, blown against,  
Falls back, the voice with which I  
fenced

A little ceased, but recommenced.

"Where wert thou when thy father  
play'd

In his free field, and pastime made,  
A merry boy in sun and shade ?

"A merry boy they called him then,  
He sat upon the knees of men  
In days that never come again.

"Before the little ducts began  
To feed thy bones with lime, and ran  
Their course, till thou wert also man :

"Who took a wife, who rear'd his race,  
Whose wrinkles gather'd on his face,  
Whose troubles number with his  
days :

"A life of nothings, nothing worth,  
From that first nothing ere his birth  
To that last nothing under earth !"

"These words," I said, "are like the  
rest,  
No certain clearness, but at best  
A vague suspicion of the breast :

"But if I grant, thou might'st defend  
The thesis which thy words intend—  
That to begin implies to end ;

"Yet how should I for certain hold,  
Because my memory is so cold,  
That I first was in human mould ?

"I cannot make this matter plain,  
But I would shoot, howe'er in vain,  
A random arrow from the brain.

"It may be that no life is found,  
Which only to one engine bound  
Falls off, but cycles always round.

"As old mythologies relate,  
Some draught of Lethe might await  
The slipping thro' from state to state.

"As here we find in trances, men  
Forget the dream that happens then,  
Until they fall in trance again.

"So might we, if our state were such  
As one before, remember much,  
For those two likes might meet and  
touch.

"But, if I lapsed from nobler place,  
Some legend of a fallen race  
Alone might hint of my disgrace ;

"Some vague emotion of delight  
In gazing up an Alpine height,  
Some yearning toward the lamps of  
night.

"Or if thro' lower lives I came—  
Tho' all experience past became  
Consolidate in mind and frame—

"I might forget my weaker lot ;  
For is not our first year forgot ?  
The haunts of memory echo not.

"And men, whose reason long was  
blind,  
From cells of madness unconfined,  
Oft lose whole years of darker mind.

"Much more, if first I floated free,  
As naked essence, must I be  
Incompetent of memory :

"For memory dealing but with time,  
And he with matter, should she climb  
Beyond her own material prime ?

"Moreover, something is or seems,  
That touches me with mystic gleams,  
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams—

"Of something felt, like something  
here ;  
Of something done, I know not where ;  
Such as no language may declare."

The still voice laugh'd. "I talk," said  
he,

"Not with thy dreams. Suffice it thee  
Thy pain is a reality."

"But thou," said I, "hast miss'd thy  
mark,

Who sought'st to wreck my mortal ark,  
By making all the horizon dark.

"Why not set forth, if I should do  
This rashness, that which might ensue  
With this old soul in organs new ?

"Whatever crazy sorrow saith,  
No life that breathes with human  
breath  
Has ever truly long'd for death.

"'Tis life, whereof our nerves are  
scant,

O life, not death, for which we pant ;  
More life, and fuller, that I want."

I ceased, and sat as one forlorn.  
Then said the voice, in quiet scorn,  
"Behold it is the Sabbath morn."

And I arose, and I released  
The casement, and the light increased  
With freshness in the dawning east.

Like soften'd airs that blowing steal,  
When meres begin to uncongeal,  
The sweet church bells began to peal.

On to God's house the people prest :  
Passing the place where each must  
rest,

Each enter'd like a welcome guest.

One walk'd between his wife and child,  
With measured footfall firm and mild,  
And now and then he gravely smiled.

The prudent partner of his blood  
Lean'd on him, faithful, gentle, good,  
Wearing the rose of womanhood.

And in their double love secure,  
The little maiden walk'd demure,  
Pacing with downward eyelids pure.

These three made unity so sweet,  
My frozen heart began to beat,  
Remembering its ancient heat.

I blest them, and they wander'd on :  
I spoke, but answer came there none ;  
The dull and bitter voice was gone.

A second voice was at mine ear,  
A little whisper silver-clear,  
A murmur, "Be of better cheer."

As from some blissful neighborhood,  
A notice faintly understood,  
"I see the end, and know the good."

A little hint to solace woe,  
A hint, a whisper breathing low,  
"I may not speak of what I know."

Like an Æolian harp that wakes  
No certain air, but overtakes  
Far thought with music that it makes:  
Such seem'd the whisper at my side :  
"What is it thou knowest, sweet  
voice?" I cried.

"A hidden hope," the voice replied:  
So heavenly-toned, that in that hour  
From out my sullen heart a power  
Broke, like the rainbow from the  
shower,

To feel, altho' no tongue can prove,  
That every cloud, that spreads above  
And veileth love, itself is love.

And forth into the fields I went,  
And Nature's living motion lent  
The pulse of hope to discontent.

I wonder'd at the bounteous hours,  
The slow result of winter showers:  
You scarce could see the grass for  
flowers.

I wonder'd, while I paced along:  
The woods were fill'd so full with song,  
There seem'd no room for sense of  
wrong.

So variously seem'd all things wrought,  
I marvel'd how the mind was brought  
To anchor by one gloomy thought;  
And wherefore rather I made choice  
To commune with that barren voice,  
Than him that said, "Rejoice! re-  
joice!"

## THE DAY DREAM.

### PROLOGUE.

O LADY FLORA, let me speak:  
A pleasant hour has past away  
While, dreaming on your damask  
cheek,

The dewy sister-eyelids lay.  
As by the lattice you reclined,  
I went thro' many wayward moods  
To see you dreaming—and, behind,  
A summer crisp with shining woods.  
And I too dream'd, until at last  
Across my fancy, brooding warm,  
The reflex of a legend past,  
And loosely settled into form.

And would you have the thought I  
had,

And see the vision that I saw,  
Then take the broidery-frame, and add  
A crimson to the quaint Macaw,  
And I will tell it. Turn your face,  
Nor look with that too-earnest eye—  
The rhymes are cazzled from their  
place,

And order'd words asunder fly.

### THE SLEEPING PALACE.

#### I.

The varying year with blade and sheaf  
Clothes and reclothes the happy  
plains;

Here rests the sap within the leaf,  
Here stays the blood along the veins  
Faint shadows, vapors lightly curl'd,  
Faint murmurs from the meadows  
come,  
Like hints and echoes of the world  
To spirits folded in the womb.

#### II.

Soft lustre bathes the range of urns  
On every slanting terrace-lawn.  
The fountain to his place returns  
Deep in the garden lake withdrawn.  
Here droops the banner on the tower,  
On the hall-hearths the festal fires,  
The peacock in his laurel bower,  
The parrot in his gilded wires.

#### III.

Roof-haunting martins warm their  
eggs:  
In these, in these the life is stay'd.  
The mantles from the golden pegs  
Droop sleepily; no sound is made,  
Not even of a gnat that sings.  
More like a picture seemeth all  
Than those old portraits of old kings,  
That watch the sleepers from the  
wall.

#### IV.

Here sits the Butler with a flask  
Between his knees, half-drain'd; and  
there  
The wrinkled steward at his task,  
The maid-of-honor blooming fair;  
The page has caught her hand in his:  
Her lips are sever'd as to speak:  
His own are pouted to a kiss:  
The blush is fix'd upon her cheek.

#### V.

Till all the hundred summers pass,  
The beams, that thro' the Oriel  
shine,  
Make prisms in every carven glass,  
And beaker brimm'd with noble  
wine.  
Each baron at the banquet sleeps,  
Grave faces gather'd in a ring.  
His state the king reposing keeps.  
He must have been a jovial king.

#### VI.

All round a hedge upshoots, and shows  
At distance like a little wood;  
Thorns, ivies, woodbine, mistletoes,  
And grapes with bunches red as  
blood;  
All creeping plants, a wall of green  
Close-matted, burr and brake and  
brier,  
And glimpsing over these, just seen,  
High up, the topmost palace-spire.

#### VII.

When will the hundred summers die,  
And thought and time be born again,  
And never knowledge, drawing nigh,  
Bring truth that sways the soul of  
men?

Here all things in their place remain,  
As all were order'd, ages since.  
Come, Care and Pleasure, Hope and  
Pain,  
And bring the fated fairy Prince.

## THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

## I.

YEAR after year unto her feet,  
She lying on her couch alone,  
Across the purpled coverlet,  
The maiden's jet-black hair has  
grown,  
On either side her tranced form  
Forth streaming from a braid of  
pearl:  
The slumbrous light is rich and warm,  
And moves not on the rounded curl.

## II.

The silk star-broider'd coverlid  
Unto her limbs itself doth mould  
Languidly ever; and, amid  
Her full black ringlets downward  
roll'd,  
Glow's forth each softly-shadow'd arm  
With bracelets of the diamond bright:  
Her constant beauty doth inform  
Stillness with love, and day with  
light.

## III.

She sleeps: her breathings are not  
heard  
In palace chambers far apart.  
The fragrant tresses are not stirr'd  
That lie upon her charmed heart.  
She sleeps: on either hand upswells  
The gold-fringed pillow lightly  
prest:  
She sleeps, nor dreams, but ever dwells  
A perfect form in perfect rest.

## THE ARRIVAL.

## I.

ALL precious things, discover'd late,  
To those that seek them issue forth;  
For love in sequel works with fate,  
And draws the veil from hidden  
worth.  
He travels far from other skies—  
His mantle glitters on the rocks—  
A fairy Prince, with joyful eyes,  
And lighter-footed than the fox.

## II.

The bodies and the bones of those  
That strove in other days to pass,  
Are wither'd in the thorny close,  
Or scatter'd blanching on the grass.  
He gazes on the silent dead:  
"They perish'd in their daring  
deeds."

This proverb flashes thro' his head,  
"The many fail: the one succeeds."

## III.

He comes, scarce knowing what he  
seeks:  
He breaks the hedge: he enters  
there:

The color flies into his cheeks:

He trusts to light on something fairy  
For all his life the charm did talk  
About his path, and hover near  
With words of promise in his walk,  
And whisper'd voices at his ear.

## IV.

More close and close his footsteps  
wind:

The Magic Music in his heart  
Beats quick and quicker, till he find  
The quiet chamber far apart.  
His spirit flutters like a lark,  
He stoops—to kiss her—on his knee.  
"Love, if thy tresses be so dark,  
How dark those hidden eyes must  
be!"

## THE REVIVAL.

## I.

A TOUCH, a kiss! the charm was snapt.  
There rose a noise of striking clocks,  
And feet that ran, and doors that clapt,  
And barking dogs, and crowing  
cocks;  
A fuller light illumined all,  
A breeze thro' all the garden swept,  
A sudden hubbub shook the hall,  
And sixty feet the fountain leapt.

## II.

The hedge broke in, the banner blew,  
The butler drank, the steward  
scrawl'd,  
The fire shot up, the martin flew,  
The parrot scream'd, the peacock  
squall'd,  
The maid and page renew'd their strife,  
The palace bang'd, and buzz'd and  
clackt,  
And all the long-pent stream of life  
Dash'd downward in a cataract.

## III.

And last with these the king awoke,  
And in his chair himself uprear'd,  
And yawn'd, and rubb'd his face, and  
spoke,  
"By holy rood, a royal beard!  
How say you? we have slept, my lords.  
My beard has grown into my lap."  
The baron swore, with many words,  
'Twas but an after-dinner's nap.

## IV.

"Pardy," returned the king, "but  
still  
My joints are somewhat stiff or so.  
My lord, and shall we pass the bill  
I mention'd half an hour ago?"  
The chancellor, sedate and vain,  
In courteous words return'd reply:  
But dallied with his golden chain,  
And, smiling, put the question by.

## THE DEPARTURE.

## I.

AND on her lover's arm she leant,  
And round her waist she felt it fold,

And far across the hills they went  
 In that new world which is the old :  
 Across the hills, and far away  
 Beyond their utmost purple rim,  
 And deep into the dying day  
 The happy princess follow'd him.

## II.

"I'd sleep another hundred years,  
 O love, for such another kiss ;"  
 "O wake for ever, love," she hears,  
 "O love, 'twas such as this and this."  
 And o'er them many a sliding star,  
 And many a merry wind was borne,  
 And, stream'd thro' many a golden bar,  
 The twilight melted into morn.

## III.

"O eyes long laid in happy sleep !"  
 "O happy sleep, that lightly fled !"  
 "O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep !"  
 "O love, thy kiss would wake the  
 dead !"  
 And o'er them many a flowing range  
 Of vapour buoy'd the crescent-bark,  
 And, rapt thro' many a rosy change,  
 The twilight died into the dark.

## IV.

"A hundred summers ! can it be ?  
 And whither goest thou, tell me  
 where ?"  
 "O seek my father's court with me,  
 For there are greater wonders there."  
 And o'er the hills, and far away  
 Beyond their utmost purple rim,  
 Beyond the night, across the day,  
 Thro' all the world she follow'd him.

## MORAL.

## I.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,  
 And if you find no moral there,  
 Go, look in any glass and say,  
 What moral is in being fair.  
 O, to what uses shall we put  
 The wildweed-flower that simply  
 blows ?  
 And is there any moral shut  
 Within the bosom of the rose ?

## II.

But any man that walks the mead,  
 In bud or blade, or bloom, may find,  
 According as his humors lead,  
 A meaning suited to his mind.  
 And liberal applications lie  
 In Art like Nature, dearest friend ;  
 So 'twere to cramp its use, if I  
 Should hook it to some useful end.

## L'ENVOI.

## I.

You shake your head. A random  
 string  
 Your finer female sense offends.  
 Well—were it not a pleasant thing  
 To fall asleep with all one's friends ;  
 To pass with all our social ties  
 To silence from the paths of men ;  
 And every hundred years to rise

And learn the world, and sleep again,  
 To sleep thro' terms of mighty wars,  
 And wake on science grown to more,  
 On secrets of the brain, the stars,  
 As wild as aught of fairy lore ;  
 And all that else the years will show.  
 The Poet-forms of stronger hours,  
 The vast Republics that may grow,  
 The Federations and the Powers ;  
 Titanic forces taking birth  
 In divers seasons, divers climes ;  
 For we are Ancients of the earth,  
 And in the morning of the times.

## II.

So sleeping, so aroused from sleep  
 Thro' sunny decades new and strange,  
 Or gay quinqueniads would we reap  
 The flower and quintessence of  
 change.

## III.

Ah, yet would I—and would I might !  
 So much your eyes my fancy take—  
 Be still the first to leap to light  
 That I might kiss those eyes awake !  
 For, am I right, or am I wrong,  
 To choose your own you did not care ;  
 You'd have my moral from the song,  
 And I will take my pleasure there :  
 And, am I right or am I wrong,  
 My fancy, ranging thro' and thro',  
 To search a meaning for the song,  
 Perforce will still revert to you ;  
 Nor finds a closer truth than this  
 All-graceful head, so richly curl'd,  
 And evermore a costly kiss  
 The prelude to some brighter world.

## IV.

For since the time when Adam first  
 Embraced his Eve in happy hour,  
 And every bird of Eden burst  
 In carol, every bud to flower,  
 What eyes, like thine, have waken'd  
 hopes ?  
 What lips, like thine, so sweetly  
 join'd ?  
 Where on the double rosebud droops  
 The fulness of the pensive mind :  
 Which all too dearly self-involved,  
 Yet sleeps a dreamless sleep to me ;  
 A sleep by kisses undissolved,  
 That lets thee neither hear nor see :  
 But break it. In the name of wife,  
 And in the rights that name may  
 give,  
 Are clasp'd the moral of thy life,  
 And that for which I care to live.

## EPILOGUE.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,  
 And, if you find a meaning there,  
 O whisper to your glass, and say,  
 "What wonder, if he thinks me  
 fair ?"  
 What wonder I was all unwise,  
 To shape the song for your delight  
 Like long-tail'd birds of Paradise,  
 That float thro' Heaven, and cannot  
 light !

Or old-world trains, upheld at court  
By Cupid-boys of blooming hue —  
But take it — earnest wed with sport,  
And either sacred unto you.

#### AMPHION.

My father left a park to me,  
But it is wild and barren,  
A garden too with scarce a tree,  
And waster than a warren:  
Yet say the neighbors when they call,  
It is not bad but good land,  
And in it is the germ of all  
That grows within the woodland.  
O had I lived when song was great  
In days of old Amphion,  
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,  
Nor cared for seed or scion!  
And had I lived when song was great,  
And legs of trees were limber,  
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,  
And fiddled in the timber!  
'Tis said he had a tuneful tongue,  
Such happy intonation,  
Wherever he sat down and sung  
He left a small plantation;  
Wherever in a lonely grove  
He set up his forlorn pipes,  
The gouty oaks began to move,  
And flounder into hornpipes  
The mountain stirr'd its bushy crown,  
And, as tradition teaches,  
Young ashes pirouetted down  
Coquetting with young beeches;  
And briony-vine and ivy-wreath  
Ran forward to his rhyming,  
And from the valleys underneath  
Came little corpses climbing.  
The linden broke her ranks and rent  
The woodbine wreaths that bind her,  
And down the middle buzz! she went  
With all her bees behind her;  
The poplars, in long order due,  
With cypress promenaded,  
The shock-head willows two and two  
By rivers galloped.  
Came wet-shot alder from the wave,  
Came yews, a dismal coterie;  
Each pluck'd his one foot from the  
grave,  
Poussetting with a sloe-tree:  
Old elms came breaking from the vine,  
The vine stream'd out to follow,  
And, sweating rosin, plump'd the pine  
From many a cloudy hollow.  
And wasn't it a sight to see,  
When, ere his song was ended,  
Like some great landslip, tree by tree,  
The country-side descended;  
And shepherds from the mountain-  
eaves  
Look'd down, half-pleased, half-  
frighten'd,  
As dash'd about the drunken leaves  
The random sunshine lighten'd!  
Oh! nature first was fresh to men,  
And wanton without measure;

So youthful and so flexible then,  
You moved her at your pleasure.  
Twang out, my fiddle! shake the  
twigs!  
And make her dance attendance,  
Blow, flute, and stir the stiff-set  
sprigs,  
And scirrhous roots and tendons.  
'Tis vain! in such a brassy age  
I could not move a thistle;  
The very sparrows in the hedge  
Scarce answer to my whistle;  
Or at the most, when three-parts-sick  
With strumming and with scraping,  
A jackass heehaws from the rick,  
The passive oxen gaping.  
But what is that I hear? a sound  
Like sleepy counsel pleading;  
O Lord! — 'tis in my neighbour's  
ground,  
The modern Muses reading.  
They read Botanic Treatises,  
And Works on Gardening thro'  
there,  
And Methods of transplanting trees,  
To look as if they grew there.  
The wither'd Misses! how they prose  
O'er books of travell'd seamen,  
And show you slips of all that grows  
From England to Van Diemen.  
They read in arbors clipt and cut,  
And alleys, faded places,  
By squares of tropic summer shut  
And warm'd in crystal cases.  
But these, tho' fed with careful dirt,  
Are neither green nor sappy;  
Half-conscious of the garden-squirt,  
The spindlings look unhappy.  
Better to me the meanest weed  
That blows upon its mountain,  
The vilest herb that runs to seed  
Beside its native fountain.  
And I must work thro' months of toil  
And years of cultivation,  
Upon my proper patch of soil  
To grow my own plantation.  
I'll take the showers as they fall,  
I will not vex my bosom:  
Enough if at the end of all  
A little garden blossom.

#### ST. AGNES' EVE.

DEEP on the convent-roof the snows  
Are sparkling to the moon:  
My breath to heaven like vapor goes:  
May my soul follow soon!  
The shadows of the convent-towers  
Slant down the snowy sward,  
Still creeping with the creeping hours  
That lead me to my Lord:  
Make Thou my spirit pure and clear  
As are the frosty skies,  
Or this first snowdrop of the year  
That in my bosom lies.  
As these white robes are soil'd and  
dark,

To yonder shining ground ;  
 As this pale taper's earthly spark,  
 To yonder argent round ;  
 So shows my soul before the Lamb,  
 My spirit before Thee ;  
 So in mine earthly house I am,  
 To that I hope to be.  
 Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and  
 far,  
 Thro' all yon starlight keen,  
 Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,  
 In raiment white and clean.  
 He lifts me to the golden doors ;  
 The flashes come and go ;  
 All heaven bursts her starry floors,  
 And strews her lights below,  
 And deepens on and up ! the gates  
 Roll back, and far within  
 For me the Heavenly Bridegroom  
 waits,  
 To make me pure of sin.  
 The sabbaths of Eternity,  
 One sabbath deep and wide  
 A light upon the shining sea —  
 The Bridegroom with his bride !

## SIR GALAHAD.

My good blade carves the casques of  
 men,  
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,  
 My strength is as the strength of ten,  
 Because my heart is pure.  
 The shattering trumpet-shrilleth high,  
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,  
 The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and  
 fly,  
 The horse and rider reel :  
 They reel, they roll in clanging lists,  
 And when the tide of combat stands,  
 Perfume and flowers fall in showers,  
 That lightly rain from ladies' hands.  
 How sweet are looks that ladies bend  
 On whom their favors fall !  
 For them I battle till the end,  
 To save from shame and thrall :  
 But all my heart is drawn above,  
 My knees are bow'd in crypt and  
 shrine :  
 I never felt the kiss of love,  
 Nor maiden's hand in mine.  
 More bounteous aspects on me beam,  
 Me mightier transports move and  
 thrill ;  
 So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer  
 A virgin heart in work and will.  
 When down the stormy crescent goes,  
 A light before me swims.  
 Between dark stems the forest glows,  
 I hear a noise of hymns :  
 Then by some secret shrine I ride ;  
 I hear a voice, but none are there ;  
 The stalls are void, the doors are wide,  
 The tapers burning fair.  
 Fair gleams the snowy altar cloth,  
 The silver vessels sparkle clean,  
 The shrill bell rings, the censer swins,  
 And solemn chants resound be-  
 tween,

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres  
 I find a magic bark ;  
 I leap on board : no helmsman steers—  
 I float till all is dark.  
 A gentle sound, and awful light !  
 Three angels bear the holy Grail ;  
 With folded feet, in stoles of white,  
 On sleeping wings they sail.  
 Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !  
 My spirit beats her mortal bars,  
 As down dark tides the glory slides,  
 And star-like mingles with the stars

When on my goodly charger borne  
 Thro' dreaming towns I go,  
 The cock crows ere the Christmas  
 morn,  
 The streets are dumb with snow.  
 The tempest crackles on the leads,  
 And, ringing, springs from brand and  
 mail ;  
 But o'er the dark a glory spreads,  
 And gilds the driving hail.  
 I leave the plain, I climb the height ;  
 No branchy thicket shelter yields ;  
 But blessed forms in whistling storms  
 Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields

A maiden knight—to me is given  
 Such hope, I know not fear ;  
 I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven  
 That often meet me here.  
 I muse on you that will not cease,  
 Pure spaces clothed in living beams,  
 Pure lilies of eternal peace,  
 Whose odors haunt my dreams ;  
 And, stricken by an angel's hand,  
 This mortal armor that I wear,  
 This weight and size, this heart and  
 eyes,  
 Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,  
 And thro' the mountain-walls  
 A rolling organ-harmony  
 Swells up, and shakes and falls.  
 Then move the trees, the copses nod,  
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear :  
 " O just and faithful knight of God !  
 Ride on ! the prize is near."  
 So pass I hostel, hall, and grange ;  
 By bridge and ford, by park and pale,  
 All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,  
 Until I find the holy Grail.

## EDWARD GRAY.

SWEET Emma Moreland of yonder  
 town  
 Met me walking on yonder way,  
 " And have you lost your heart ?" she  
 said,  
 " And are you married yet, Edward  
 Gray ?"

Sweet Emma Moreland spoke to me :  
 Bitterly weeping I turn'd away :  
 " Sweet Emma Moreland, love no more  
 Can touch the heart of Edward Gray.

"Ellen Adair she loved me well,  
Against her father's and mother's  
will :

To-day I sat for an hour and wept,  
By Ellen's grave, on the windy hill.

"Shy she was, and I thought her cold ;  
Thought her proud, and fled over the  
sea ;

Fell'd I was with folly and spite,  
When Ellen Adair was dying for me.

"Cruel, cruel the words I said !

Cruelly came they back to-day :

'You're too slight and fickle,' I said,  
'To trouble the heart of Edward  
Gray.'

"There I put my face in the grass—  
Whisper'd, 'Listen to my despair :  
I repent me of all I did :  
Speak a little, Ellen Adair !'

"Then I took a pencil, and wrote  
On the mossy stone, as I lay,  
'Here lies the body of Ellen Adair ;  
And here the heart of Edward Gray !'

"Love may come, and love may go,  
And fly, like a bird, from tree to tree ;  
But I will love no more, no more,  
Till Ellen Adair come back to me.

"Bitterly wept I over the stone :  
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away :  
There lies the body of Ellen Adair !  
And there the heart of Edward  
Gray !"

#### WILL WATERPROOF'S LYRICAL MONOLOGUE.

MADE AT THE COCK.

O PLUMP head waiter at The Cock,  
To which I most resort,  
How goes the time ? 'Tis five o'clock.  
Go fetch a pint of port :  
But let it not be such as that  
You set before chance-comers,  
But such whose father-grape grew fat  
On Lusitanian summers.

No vain libation to the Muse,  
But may she still be kind,  
And whisper lovely words, and use  
Her influence on the mind,  
To make me write my random rhymes,  
Ere they be half-forgotten ;  
Nor add and alter, many times,  
Till all be ripe and rotten.

I pledge her, and she comes and dips  
Her laurel in the wine,  
And lays it thrice upon my lips,  
These favor'd lips of mine ;  
Until the charm have power to make  
New lifeblood warm the bosom,  
And barren commonplaces break  
In full and kindly blossom.

I pledge her silent at the board ;  
Her gradual fingers steal  
And touch upon the master-chord  
Of all I felt and feel.

Old wishes, ghosts of broken plans,  
And phantom hopes assemble ;  
And that child's heart within the man's  
Begins to move and tremble.

Thro' many an hour of summer suns,  
By many pleasant ways,  
Against its fountain upward runs  
The current of my days :  
I kiss the lips I once have kiss'd ;  
The gas-light wavers dimmer.  
And softly, thro' a vinous mist,  
My college friendships glimmer.

I grow in worth, and wit, and sense,  
Unboding critic-pen,  
Or that eternal want of pence,  
Which vexes public men,  
Who hold their hands to all, and cry  
For that which all deny them—  
Who sweep the crossing, wet or dry,  
And all the world go by them.

Ah yet, tho' all the world forsake,  
Tho' fortune clip my wings,  
I will not cramp my heart, nor take  
Half-views of men and things.  
Let Whig and Tory stir their blood ;  
There must be stormy weather ;  
But for some true result of good  
All parties work together.

Let there be thistles, there are grapes ;  
If old things, there are new :  
Ten thousand broken lights and shapes,  
Yet glimpses of the true.  
Let rafts be rife in prose and rhyme,  
We lack not rhymes and reasons,  
As on this whirligig of Time  
We circle with the seasons.

This earth : rich in man and maid ;  
With fair horizons bound :  
This whole wide earth of light and  
shade  
Comes out, a perfect round.  
High over roaring Temple-bar,  
And, set in Heaven's third stiffer,  
I look at all things as they are,  
But thro' a kind of glory.

Head-waiter, honor'd by the guest  
Half-mused, or reeling ripe,  
The pint, you brought me, was the best  
That ever came from pipe.  
But tho' the port surpasses praise,  
My nerves have dealt with stiffer.  
Is there some magic in the place ?  
Or do my peptics differ ?

For since I came to live and learn,  
No pint of white or red  
Had ever half the power to turn  
This wheel within my head,  
Which bears a sea on'd brain about,  
Unsubject to confus on,  
Tho' soak'd and saturate, out and out  
Thro' every convolution.

For I am of a numerous house,  
With many kinsmen gay,  
Where long and largely we carouse  
As who shall say me nay :

Each month, a birth-day coming on,  
We drink defying trouble,  
Or sometimes two would meet in one,  
And then we drank it double ;  
Whether the vintage, yet unkept,  
Had relish fiery-new,  
Or, elbow-deep in sawdust, slept,  
As old as Waterloo ;  
Or stow'd (when classic Canning died)  
In musty bins and chambers,  
Had cast upon its crusty side  
The gloom of ten Decembers.

The Muse, the jolly Muse, it is !  
She answer'd to my call,  
She changes with that mood or this,  
Is all-in-all to all :  
She lit the spark within my throat,  
To make my blood run quicker,  
Used all her fiery will, and smote  
Her life into the liquor.

And hence this halo lives about  
The waiter's hands, that reach  
To each his perfect pint of stout,  
His proper chop to each.  
He looks not like the common breed  
That with the naykin dally ;  
I think he came like Ganymede,  
From some delightful valley.

The Cock was of a larger egg  
Than modern poultry drop,  
Stept forward on a firmer leg,  
And cramm'd a plumper crop :  
Upon an ampler dunghill trod,  
Crow'd lustier late and early,  
Sipt wine from silver, praising God,  
And raked in golden barley.

A private life was all his joy,  
Till in a court he saw  
A something-pottle-bodied boy  
That knuckled at the taw :  
He stoop'd and clutch'd him, fair and  
good,  
Flew over roof and casement :  
His brothers of the weather stood  
Stock-still for sheer amazement.

But he, by farmstead, thorpe and  
spire,  
And follow'd with acclaims,  
A sign to many a staring shire  
Came crowing over Thames,  
Right down by smoky Paul's they bore,  
Till, where the street grows straiter,  
One fix'd for ever at the door,  
And one became head-waiter.

But whither would my fancy go ?  
How out of place she makes  
The violet of a legend blow  
Among the chops and steaks !  
'Tis but a steward of the can,  
One shade more plump than com-  
mon ;  
As just and mere a serving-man  
As any, born of woman.

I ranged too high: what draws me down  
Into the common day ?  
Is it the weight of that half-crown,

Which I shall have to pay ?  
For something duller than at first,  
Nor wholly comfortable,  
I sit (my empty glass reversed),  
And thrumming on the table :

Half fearful that, with self at strife  
I take myself to task ;  
Lest of the fulness of my life  
I leave an empty flask :  
For I had hope, by something rare,  
To prove myself a poet :  
But while I plan and plan, my hair  
Is gray before I know it.

So fares it since the years began,  
Till they be gather'd up ;  
The truth, that flies the flowing can,  
Will haunt the vacant cup :  
And others' follies teach us not,  
Nor much their wisdom teaches ;  
And most, of sterling worth, is what  
Our own experience preaches.

Ah, let the rusty theme alone !  
We know not what we know.  
But for my pleasant hour, 'tis gone,  
'Tis gone, and let it go.  
'Tis gone : a thousand such have slipt  
Away from my embraces,  
And fall'n into the dusty crypt  
Of darken'd forms and faces.

Go, therefore, thou! thy betters went  
Long since, and came no more ;  
With peals of genial clamor sent  
From many a tavern-door ;  
With twisted quirks and happy hits,  
From misty men of letters ;  
The tavern-hours of mighty wits—  
Thine elders and thy betters.

Hours, when the Poet's words and  
looks  
Had yet their native glow :  
Nor yet the fear of little books  
Had made him talk for show ;  
But, all his vast heart sherris-warm'd,  
He flash'd his random speeches ;  
Ere days, that deal in ana, swarm'd  
His literary leeches.

So mix for ever with the past,  
Like all good things on earth !  
For should I prize thee, couldst thou  
last,  
At half thy real worth ?  
I hold it good, good things should pass :  
With time I will not quarrel :  
It is but yonder empty glass  
That makes me maudlin-moral.

Head-waiter of the chop-house here,  
To which I most resort,  
I too must part: I hold thee dear  
For this good pint of port.  
For this, thou shalt from all things  
suck  
Marrow of mirth and laughter ;  
And, whereso'er thou move, good luck  
Shall find her old shoe after.  
But thou wilt never move from hence,

The sphere thy fate allots :  
Thy latter days increased with pence  
Go down among the pots :  
Thou battenest by the greasy gleam  
In haunts of hungry sinners,  
Old boxes, larded with the steam  
Of thirty thousand dinners.

We fret, we fume, would shift our  
skins,  
Would quarrel with our lot ;  
Thy care is, under polish'd tins,  
To serve the hot-and-hot ;  
To come and go, and come again,  
Returning like the pewit,  
And watch'd by silent gentlemen,  
That trifle with the cruet.

Live long, ere from thy topmost head  
The thick-set hazel dies ;  
Long, ere the hateful crow shall tread  
The corners of thine eyes :  
Live long, nor feel in head or chest  
Our changeful equinoxes,  
Till mellow Death, like some late guest  
Shall call thee from the boxes.

But when he calls, and thou shalt cease  
To pace the gritted floor,  
And, laying down an unctuous lease  
Of life, shalt earn no more ;  
No carved cross-bones, the types of  
Death,  
Shall show thee past to Heaven :  
But carved cross-pipes, and, under-  
neath,  
A pint-pot neatly graven.

TO ———.

AFTER READING A LIFE AND LETTERS.

"Cursed be he that moves my bones."  
*Shakespeare's Epitaph.*

You might have won the Poet's name,  
If such be worth the winning now,  
And gain'd a laurel for your brow  
Of sounder leaf than I can claim ;  
But you have made the wiser choice,  
A life that moves to gracious ends  
Thro' troops of unrecording friends,  
A deedful life, a silent voice :

And you have miss'd the irreverent  
doom

Of those that wear the Poet's crown :  
Hereafter, neither knave nor clown  
Shall hold their orgies at your tomb.

For now the Poet cannot die  
Nor leave his music as of old,  
But round him ere he scarce be cold  
Begins the scandal and the cry :

Proclaim the faults he would not  
show :

Break lock and seal : betray the trust :  
Keep nothing sacred : 'tis but just  
The many-headed beast should know."

Ah shameless ! for he did but sing  
A song that pleased us from its  
worth ;

No public life was his on earth,

No blazon'd statesman he, nor king.

He gave the people of his best :

His worst he kept, his best he gave.  
My Shakespeare's curse on clown  
and knave

Who will not let his ashes rest !

Who make it seem more sweet to be

The little life of bank and brier,

The bird that pipes his lone desire

And dies unheard within his tree,

Than he that warbles long and loud

And drops at Glory's temple-gates,

For whom the carrion vulture waits

To tear his heart before the crowd !

TO E. L., ON HIS TRAVELS IN  
GREECE.

ILLYRIAN woodlands, echoing falls  
Of water, sheets of summer glass,  
The long divine Peneïan pass,  
The vast Akroeraunian walls.

Tomohrit, Athos, all things fair,  
With such a pencil, such a pen,  
You shadow forth to distant men,  
I read and felt that I was there :

And trust me while I turn'd the page  
And track'd you still on classic  
ground,

I grew in gladness till I found  
My spirits in the golden age.

For me the torrent ever pour'd  
And glisten'd—here and there alone  
The broad-limb'd Gods at random  
thrown

By fountain-urns :—and Naiads oar'd.

A glimmering shoulder under gloom  
Of cavern pillars ; on the swell  
The silver lily heaved and fell ;  
And many a slope was rich in bloom.

From him that on the mountain lea  
By dancing rivulets fed his flocks,  
To him who sat upon the rocks,  
And fluted to the morning sea.

LADY CLARE.

It was the time when lilies blow,

And clouds are highest up in air,  
Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe  
To give his cousin, Lady Clare.

I trow they did not part in scorn :  
Lovers long-betroth'd were they :  
They too will wed the morrow morn :  
God's blessing on the day !

"He does not love me for my birth,  
Nor for my lands so broad and fair,  
He loves me for my own true worth,  
And that is well," said Lady Clare.

In there came old Alice the nurse,  
Said, "Who was this that went from  
thee ?"

"It was my cousin," said Lady Clare,  
"To-morrow he weds with me."

"O God be thank'd!" said Alice the nurse,  
 "That all comes round so just and fair;  
 Lord Ronald is heir of all your lands,  
 And you are not the Lady Clare."

"Are ye out of your mind, my nurse, my nurse?"  
 Said Lady Clare, "that ye speak so wild?"

"As God's above," said Alice the nurse,  
 "I speak the truth: you are my child."

"The old Earl's daughter died at my breast;  
 I speak the truth, as I live by bread!  
 I buried her like my own sweet child,  
 And put my child in her stead."

"Falsely, falsely have ye done,  
 O mother," she said, "if this be true,  
 To keep the best man under the sun  
 So many years from his due."

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,  
 "But keep the secret for your life,  
 And all you have will be Lord Ronald's,  
 When you are man and wife."

"If I'm a beggar born," she said,  
 "I will speak out, for I dare not lie.  
 Pull off, pull off, the brooch of gold,  
 And fling the diamond necklace by."

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,  
 "But keep the secret all ye can."  
 She said, "Not so: but I will know  
 If there be any faith in man"

"Nay now, what faith?" said Alice the nurse,  
 "The man will cleave unto his right."  
 "And he shall have it," the lady replied,  
 "Tho' I should die to-night."

"Yet give one kiss to your mother dear!  
 Alas, my child, I sinn'd for thee."  
 "O mother, mother, mother," she said,  
 "So strange it seems to me."

"Yet here's a kiss for my mother dear,  
 My mother dear, if this be so,  
 And lay your hand upon my head,  
 And bless me, mother, e'er I go."

She clad herself in a russet gown,  
 She was no longer Lady Clare:  
 She went by dale, and she went by down,  
 With a single rose in her hair.  
 The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had brought

Leapt up from where she lay,  
 Dropt her head in the maiden's hand,  
 And follow'd her all the way.  
 Down stept Lord Ronald from his tower;  
 "O Lady Clare, you shame your worth!  
 Why come you drest like a village maid,  
 That are the flower of the earth?"

"If I come drest like a village maid,  
 I am but as my fortunes are:  
 I am a beggar born," she said,  
 "And not the Lady Clare."

"Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,  
 "For I am yours in word and in deed.  
 Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,  
 "Your riddle is hard to read."  
 O and proudly stood she up!  
 Her heart within her did not fail:  
 She look'd into Lord Ronald's eyes,  
 And told him all her nurse's tale.  
 He laugh'd a laugh of merry scorn;  
 He turned and kiss'd her where she stood:

"If you you are not the heiress born,  
 And I," said he, "the next in blood—"

"If you are not the heiress born,  
 And I," said he, "the lawful heir,  
 We two will wed to-morrow morn,  
 And you shall still be Lady Clare."

## THE LORD OF BURLEIGH.

In her ear he whispers gayly,  
 "If my heart by signs can tell,  
 Maiden, I have watch'd thee daily,  
 And I think thou lov'st me well."  
 She replies, in accents fainter,  
 "There is none I love like thee."  
 He is but a landscape painter,  
 And a village maiden she.

He to lips, that fondly falter,  
 Presses his without reproof:  
 Leads her to the village altar,  
 And they leave her father's roof.

"I can make no marriage present:  
 Little can I give my wife.  
 Love will make our cottage pleasant,  
 And I love thee more than life."  
 They by parks and lodges going  
 See the lordly castles stand:  
 Summer woods, about them blowing,  
 Made a murmur in the land.

From deep thought himself he rouses,  
 Says to her that loves him well,  
 "Let us see these handsome houses  
 Where the wealthy nobles dwell,"  
 So she goes by him attended,  
 Hears him lovingly converse,  
 Sees whatever fair and splendid  
 Lay betwixt his home and hers:

Parks with oak and chestnut shady,  
 Parks and order'd gardens great,  
 Ancient homes of lord and lady,  
 Built for pleasure and for state,

All he shows her makes him dearer :  
 Evermore she seems to gaze  
 On that cottage growing nearer,  
 Where they twain will spend their  
 days.

O but she will love him truly !  
 He shall have a che'rful home ;  
 She will order all things duly,  
 When beneath his roof they come.

Thus her heart rejoices greatly,  
 Till a gateway she discerns  
 With armorial bearings stately,  
 And beneath the gate she turns ;  
 Sees a mansion more majestic  
 Than all those she saw before ;

Many a gallant gay domestic,  
 Bows before him at the door.

And they speak in gentle murmur,  
 When they answer to his call,  
 While he treads with footstep firmer,  
 Leading on from hall to hall.

And, while now she wonders blindly,  
 Nor the meaning can divine,  
 Proudly turns he round and kindly,  
 "All of this is mine and thine."

Here he lives in state and bounty,  
 Lord of Burleigh, fair and free,  
 Not a lord in all the county  
 Is so great a lord as he.

All at once the color flushes  
 Her sweet face from brow to chin :

As it were with shame she blushes,  
 And her spirit changed within.

Then her countenance all over  
 Pale again as death did prove :

But he clasp'd her like a lover,  
 And he cheer'd her soul with love.

So she strove against her weakness,  
 Tho' at times her spirit sank :

Shaped her heart with woman's meek-  
 ness

To all duties of her rank :

And a gentle consort made he,  
 And her gentle mind was such

That she grew a noble lady,  
 And the people loved her much.

But a trouble weigh'd upon her,  
 And perplex'd her, night and morn,

With the burden of an honor  
 Unto which she was not born.

Faint she grew and ever fainter,  
 And she murmur'd, "O, that he

Were once more that landscape-paint-  
 er,

Which did win my heart from me !"  
 So she droop'd and droop'd before  
 him,

Fading slowly from his side :  
 Three fair children first she bore him,

Then before her time she died.  
 Weeping, weeping late and early,

Walking up and pacing down,  
 Deeply mourn'd the Lord of Burleigh,

Burleigh-house by Stamford-town.  
 And he came to look upon her,

And he look'd at her and said,  
 "Bring the dress and put it on her,"

That she wore when she was wed,"  
 Then her people, softly treading,  
 Bore to earth her body, drest

In the dress that she was wed in,  
 That her spirit might have rest.

## SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN GUINEVERE.

### A FRAGMENT.

LIKE souls that balance joy and pain,  
 With tears and smiles from heaven  
 again

The maiden Spring upon the plain  
 Came in a sun-lit fall of rain.

In crystal vapor everywhere,  
 Blue isles of heaven laugh'd between,  
 And far, in forest-deeps unseen,  
 The topmost elm-tree gather'd green  
 From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet piped his song ;  
 Sometimes the throstle whistled  
 strong :

Sometimes the sparrowhawk, wheel'd  
 along,

Hush'd all the groves from fear of  
 wrong :

By grassy capes with fuller sound  
 In curves the yellowing river ran,  
 And drooping chestnut-buds began  
 To spread into the perfect fan,  
 Above the teeming ground.

Then, in the boyhood of the year,  
 Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere  
 Rode thro' the coverts of the deer,  
 With blissful treble ringing clear.

She seem'd a part of joyous  
 Spring ;

A gown of grass-green silk she wore,  
 Buckled with golden clasps before,  
 A light-green tuft of plumes she bore  
 Closed in a golden ring.

Now on some twisted ivy-net,  
 Now by some tinkling rivulet,  
 In mosses mixt with violet

Her cream-white mule his pastern set ;  
 And fleetly now she skimm'd the  
 plains

Than she whose elfin prancer springs  
 By night to eery warblings,  
 When all the glimmering moor-land  
 rings

With jingling bridle-reins.  
 As she fled fast thro' sun and shade,  
 The happy winds upon her play'd,  
 Blowing the ringlet from the braid :

She look'd so lovely, as she sway'd  
 The rein with dainty finger-tips,  
 A man had given all other bliss,  
 And all his worldly worth for this,  
 To waste his whole heart in one kiss  
 Upon her perfect lips.

### A FAREWELL.

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea ;  
 Thy tribute wave deliver :

No more by thee my steps shall be,  
 For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,  
 A rivulet then a river :

No where by thee my steps shall be,  
For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder tree,  
And here thine aspen shiver ;  
And here by thee will hum the bee,  
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,  
A thousand moons will quiver :  
But not by thee my steps shall be,  
For ever and for ever.

## THE BEGGAR MAID.

HER arms across her breast she laid ;  
She was more fair than words can  
say :

Bare-footed came the beggar maid  
Before the king Cophetua.

In robe and crown the king stepped  
down,

To meet and greet her on her way ;  
"It is no wonder," said the lords,  
"She is more beautiful than day."

As shines the moon in clouded skies,  
She in her poor attire was seen :  
One praised her ankles, one her eyes,  
One her dark hair and lovesome  
mien.

So sweet a face, such angel grace,  
In all that land had never been :

Cophetua sware a royal oath :

"This beggar maid shall be my  
queen !"

## THE VISION OF SIN.

## I.

I HAD a vision when the night was  
late ;

A youth came riding toward a palace-  
gate.

He rode a horse with wings, that would  
have flown,

But that his heavy rider kept him  
down.

And from the palace came a child of  
sin,

And took him by the curls and let him  
in,

Where sat a company with heated  
eyes,

Expecting when a fountain should  
arise :

A sleepy light upon their brows and  
lips—

As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,  
Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles  
and capes—

Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid  
shapes,

By heaps of gourds, and skins of wine,  
and piles of grapes.

## II.

Then methought I heard a mellow  
sound,

Gathering up from all the lower  
ground ;

Narrowing in to where they sat as-  
sembled

Low voluptuous music winding trem-  
bled,

Wov'n in circles : they that heard it  
sigh'd,

Panted hand in hand with faces pale,  
Swung themselves, and in low tones

replied ;  
Till the fountain spouted, showering  
wide

Sleet of diamond-drift and pearly hail ;  
Then the music touch'd the gates and

died ;  
Rose again from where it seem'd to  
fail,

Storm'd in orbs of song, a growing  
gale ;

Till thronging in and in, to where they  
waited,

As 'twere a hundred-throated nightin-  
gale,

The strong tempestuous treble  
throbb'd and palpitated ;

Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,  
Caught the sparkles, and in circles,

Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid  
mazes,

Flung the torrent rainbow round :  
Then they started from their places,

Moved with violence, changed in hue,  
Caught each other with wild grim-  
aces,

Half-invisible to the view,  
Wheeling with precipitate paces

To the melody, till they flew.  
Hair, and eyes, and limbs, and faces,

Twisted hard in fierce embraces,  
Like to Furies, like to Graces,

Dash'd together in blinding dew :  
Till, kill'd with some luxurious agony,

The nerve-dissolving melody  
Flutter'd headlong from the sky.

## III.

And then I look'd up toward a moun-  
tain-tract,

That girt the region with high cliff and  
lawn :

I saw that every morning, far with-  
drawn

Beyond the darkness and the cataract,  
God made himself an awful rose of

dawn,  
Unheeded : and detaching, fold by  
fold,

From those still heights, and, slowly  
drawing near,

A vapor heavy, hueless, formless,  
cold,

Came floating on for many a month  
and year,

Unheeded : and I thought I would  
have spoken,

And warn'd that madman ere it came  
too late :

But, as in dreams, I could not. And  
as broken,

When that cold vapor touch'd the  
palace gate,

And link'd again, I saw within my  
head

A gray and gap-tooth'd man as lean as  
death,  
Who slowly rode across a wither'd  
heath,  
And lighted at a ruin'd inn, and said:

## IV.

"Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin!  
Here is custom come your way;  
Take my brute, and lead him in,  
Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

"Bitter barmaid, waning fast!  
See that sheets are on my bed;  
What! the flower of life is past:  
It is long before you wed.

"Slipshod waiter, lank and sour,  
At the Dragon on the heath!  
Let us have a quiet hour,  
Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

"I am old, but let me drink;  
Bring me spices, bring me wine  
I remember, when I think,  
That my youth was half divine.

"Wine is good for shrivell'd lips,  
When a blanket wraps the day,  
When the rotten woodland drips,  
And the leaf is stamp'd in clay.

"Sit thee down, and have no shame,  
Cheek by jowl, and knee by knee;  
What care I for any name?  
What for order or degree?

"Let me screw thee up a peg;  
Let me loose thy tongue with wine;  
Callest thou that thing a leg?  
Which is thinnest? thine or mine?

"Thou shalt not be saved by works;  
Thou hast been a sinner too:  
Ruin'd trunks on wither'd forks,  
Empty scarecrows, I and you!

"Fill the cup, and fill the can;  
Have a rouse before the morn;  
Every moment dies a man,  
Every moment one is born.

"We are men of ruin'd blood;  
Therefore comes it we are wise.  
Fish are we that love the mud,  
Rising to no fancy-dies.

"Name and fame! to fly sublime  
Thro' the courts, the camps, the  
schools,

Is to be the ball of Time,  
Banded by the hands of fools.

"Friendship! — to be two in one —  
Let the canting liar pack!  
Well I know, when I am gone,  
How she mouths behind my back.

"Virtue! — to be good and just —  
Every heart, when sifted well,  
Is a clot of warmer dust,  
Mix'd with cunning sparks of hell.

"Oh! we two as well can look  
Whited thought and cleanly life  
As the priest, above his book  
Leering at his neighbor's wife.

"Fill the cup, and fill the can;  
Have a rouse before the morn;  
Every moment dies a man,  
Every moment one is born.

"Drink, and let the parties rave;  
They are fill'd with idle spleen;  
Rising, falling, like a wave,  
For they know not what they mean.

"He that roars for liberty  
Faster binds a tyrant's power;  
And the tyrant's cruel glee  
Forces on the freer hour.

"Fill the can, and fill the cup;  
All the windy ways of men  
Are but dust that rises up,  
And is lightly laid again.

"Greet her with applausive breath,  
Freedom, gaily doth she tread;  
In her right a civic wreath,  
In her left a human head.

"No, I love not what is new;  
She is of an ancient house:  
And I think we know the hue  
Of that cap upon her brows.

"Let her go! her thirst she slakes  
Where the bloody conduit runs:  
Then her sweetest meal she makes  
On the first-born of her sons.

"Drink to lofty hopes that cool —  
Visions of a perfect State:  
Drink we, last, the public fool,  
Frantic love and frantic hate.

"Chant me now some wicked stave,  
Till thy drooping courage rise,  
And the glow-worm of the grave  
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.

"Fear not thou to loose thy tongue;  
Set thy hoary fancies free;  
What is loathsome to the young  
Savors well to thee and me.

"Change, reverting to the years,  
When thy nerves could understand  
What there is in loving tears,  
And the warmth of hand in hand.

"Tell me tales of thy first love —  
April hopes, the fools of chance;  
Till the graves begin to move,  
And the dead begin to dance.

"Fill the can, and fill the cup:  
All the windy ways of men  
Are but dust that rises up,  
And is lightly laid again.

"Trooping from their mouldy dens  
The chap-fallen circle spreads:  
Welcome, fellow-citizens,  
Hollow hearts and empty heads!

"You are bones, and what of that?  
Every face, however full,  
Padded round with flesh and fat,  
Is but modell'd on a skull.

"Death is king, and Vivat Rex!  
Tread a measure on the stones,





Madam—if I know your sex,  
From the fashion of your bones,

"No, I cannot praise the fire  
In your eye—nor yet your lip :  
All the more do I admire  
Joints of cunning workmanship.

"Lo! God's likeness—the ground-  
plan—

Neither modell'd, glazed, or framed :  
Buss me, thou rough sketch of man,  
Far too naked to be shamed !

"Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,  
While we keep a little breath !  
Drink to heavy Ignorance !  
Hob-and-nob with brother Death !

"Thou art mazed, the night is long,  
And the longer night is near :  
What ! I am not all as wrong  
As a bitter jest is dear.

"Youthful hopes, by scores, to all.  
When the locks are crisp and curl'd ;  
Unto me my maudlin gall  
And my mockeries of the world.

"Fill the cup, and fill the can !  
Mingle madness, mingle scorn !  
Dregs of life, and lees of man :  
Yet we will not die forlorn !"

V.

The voice grew faint : there came a  
further change :

Once more uprose the mystic mountain-  
range :

Below were men and horses pierced  
with worms,  
And slowly quickening into lower  
forms ;

By shards and scurf of salt, and scum  
of dross,  
Old plash of rains, and refuse patch'd  
with moss.

Then some one spake : "Behold ! it  
was a crime

Of sense avenged by sense that wore  
with time."

Another said : "The crime of sense be-  
came

The crime of malice, and is equal  
blame."

And one : "He had not wholly quench'd  
his power ;

A little grain of conscience made him  
sour."

At last I heard a voice upon the slope  
Cry to the summit, "Is there any  
hope?"

To which an answer peal'd from that  
high land,

But in a tongue no man could under-  
stand ;

And on the glimmering limit far with-  
drawn

God made Himself an awful rose of  
dawn.

COME not, when I am dead,

To drop thy foolish tears upon my  
grave,

To trample round my fallen head,  
And vex the unhappy dust thou  
wouldst not save.

There let the wind sweep and the  
plover cry ;  
But thou, go by.

Child, if it were thine error or thy  
crime

I care no longer, being all unblest :  
Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of  
Time,

And I desire to rest.  
Pass on, weak heart, and leave me  
where I lie :

Go by, go by.

## THE EAGLE

### FRAGMENT.

HE clasps the crag with hooked hands ;  
Close to the sun in lonely lands,  
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls ;  
He watches from his mountain walls ;  
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

Move eastward, happy earth, and leave  
Yon orange sunset waning slow :

From fringes of the faded eve,  
O, happy planet, eastward go ;

Till over thy dark shoulder glow  
Thy silver sister-world, and rise  
To glass herself in dewy eyes  
That watch me from the glen below.

Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly borne,  
Dip forward under starry light,  
And move me to my marriage-morn,  
And round again to happy night.

## INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.

UPLIFT a thousand voices full and sweet,  
In this wide hall with earth's invention  
stored,

And praise th' invisible universal Lord,  
Who lets once more in peace the nations  
meet,

Where Science, Art, and Labor have  
outpour'd

Their myriad horns of plenty at our feet,

O silent father of our Kings to be  
Mourn'd in this golden hour of jubilee,  
For this, for all, we weep our thanks to  
thee !

The world-compelling plan was thine,  
And lo ! the long laborious miles,  
Of Palace ; lo ! the giant aisles,  
Rich in model and design ;  
Harvest-tool and husbandry,  
Loom and wheel and engin'ry,  
Secrets of the sullen mine,  
Steel and gold, and corn and wine,  
Fabric rough, or Fairy fine,  
Sunny tokens of the Line,

Polar marvels, and a feast  
Of wonder out of West and East,  
And shapes and hues of Art divine!  
All of beauty, all of use,  
That one fair planet can produce,  
Brought from under every star,  
Blown from over every main,  
And mixt, as life is mixt with pain,  
The works of peace with works of war.

O ye, the wise who think, the wise who reign,  
From growing commerce loose her latest  
chain,

And let the fair white-winged peacemaker  
fly  
To happy havens under all the sky,  
And mix the seasons and the golden hours,  
Till each man finds his own in all men's  
good,  
And all men work in noble brotherhood,  
Breaking their mailed fleets and armed  
towers,  
And ruling by obeying Nature's powers,  
And gathering all the fruits of peace and  
crown'd with all her flowers.

## MAUD.

## I.

## I.

I HATE the dreadful hollow behind the little wood,  
Its lips in the field above are dabbled with blood-red heath,  
The red-ribb'd ledges drip with a silent horror of blood,  
And Echo there, whatever is ask'd her, answers "Death."

## II.

For there in the ghastly pit long since a body was found,  
His who had given me life—O father! O God! was it well?—  
Mangled, and flatten'd, and crush'd, and dinted into the ground:  
There yet lies the rock that fell with him when he fell.

## III.

Did he fling himself down? who knows? for a vast speculation had fail'd,  
And ever he mutter'd and madden'd, and ever wann'd with despair,  
And out he walk'd when the wind like a broken worldling wail'd,  
And the flying gold of the ruin'd woodlands drove thro' the air.

## IV.

I remember the time, for the roots of my hair were stirr'd  
By a shuffled step, by a dead weight trail'd, by a whisper'd fright,  
And my pulses closed their gates with a shock on my heart as I heard  
The shrill-edged shriek of a mother divide the shuddering night.

## V.

Villany somewhere! whose? One says, we are villains all.  
Not he: his honest fame should at least by me be maintained;  
But that old man, now lord of the broad estate and the Hall,  
Dropt off gorged from a scheme that had left us flaccid and drain'd.

## VI.

Why do they prate of the blessings of Peace? we have made them a curse,  
Pickpockets, each hand lusting for all that is not its own;  
And lust of gain, in the spirit of Cain, is it better or worse  
Than the heart of the citizen hissing in war on his own hearthstone?

## VII.

But these are the days of advance, the works of the men of mind,  
When who but a fool would have faith in a tradesman's ware or his word?  
Is it peace or war? Civil war, as I think, and that of a kind  
The viler, as underhand, not openly bearing the sword.

## VIII.

Sooner or later I too may passively take the print  
Of the golden age—why not? I have neither hope nor trust;  
May make my heart as a millstone, set my face as a flint,  
Cheat and be cheated, and die; who knows? we are ashes and dust.

## IX.

Peace sitting under her olive, and slurring the days gone by,  
When the poor are hovell'd and hustled together, each sex, like swine,  
When only the ledger lives, and when only not all men lie;  
Peace in her vineyard—yes!—but a company forges the wine.

## X.

And the vitriol madness flushes up in the ruffian's head,  
Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell of the trampled wife,  
And chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the poor for bread,  
And the spirit of murder works in the very means of life.

## XI.

And Sleep must lie down arm'd, for the villanous centre-lits  
Grind on the wakeful ear in the hush of the moonless nights,  
While another is cheating the sick of a few last gasps, as he sits  
To pestle a poison'd poison behind his crimson lights.

## XII.

When a Mammonite mother kills her babe for a burial fee,  
And Timour-Mammon grins on a pile of children's bones,  
Is it peace or war? better, war! loud war by land and by sea,  
War with a thousand battles, and shaking a hundred thrones.

## XIII.

For I trust if an enemy's fleet came yonder round by the hill,  
And the rushing battle-bolt sang from the three-decker out of the foam,  
That the smooth-faced snubnosed rogue would leap from his counter and till,  
And strike, if he could, were it but with his cheating yardwand, home,—

## XIV.

What! am I raging alone as my father raged in his mood?  
Must I too creep to the hollow and dash myself down and die  
Rather than hold by the law that I made, nevermore to brood  
On a horror of shatter'd limbs and a wretched swindler's lie?

## XV.

Would there be sorrow for *me*? there was *love* in the passionate shriek,  
Love for the silent thing that had made false haste to the grave—  
Wrapt in a cloak, as I saw him, and thought he would rise and speak  
And rave at the lie and the liar, ah God, as he used to rave.

## XVI.

I am sick of the Hall and the hill, I am sick of the moor and the main.  
Why should I stay? can a sweeter chance ever come to me here?  
O, having the nerves of motion as well as the nerves of pain,  
Were it not wise if I fled from the place and the pit and the fear?

## XVII.

Workmen up at the Hall!—they are coming back from abroad;  
The dark old place will be gilt by the touch of a millionaire;  
I have heard, I know not whence, of the singular beauty of Maud;  
I play'd with the girl when a child; she promised then to be fair.

## XVIII.

Maud with her venturous climbings and tumbles and childish escapes,  
Maud the delight of the village, the ringing joy of the Hall,  
Maud with her sweet purse-mouth when my father dangled the grapes,  
Maud the beloved of my mother, the moon-faced darling of all,—

## XIX.

What is she now? My dreams are bad. She may bring me a curse.  
No, there is fatter game on the moor; she will let me alone.  
Thanks, for the fiend best knows whether woman or man be the worse.  
I will bury myself in myself, and the Devil may pipe to his own.

## II.

LONG have I sigh'd for a calm: God grant I may find it at last!  
It will never be broken by Maud, she has neither savor nor salt,  
But a cold and clear-cut face, as I found when her carriage past,  
Perfectly beautiful: let it be granted her: where is the fault?  
All that I saw (for her eyes were downcast, not to be seen)  
Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null,  
Dead perfection, no more; nothing more, if it had not been  
For a chance of travel, a paleness, an hour's defect of the rose,  
Or an underlip, you may call it a little too ripe, too full,  
Or the least little delicate aquiline curve in a sensitive nose,  
From what I escaped heart free, with the least little touch of spleen.

## III.

COLD and clear-cut face, why come you so cruelly meek,  
Breaking a slumber in which all spleenful folly was drown'd,  
Pale with the golden beam of an eyelash dead on the cheek,  
Passionless, pale, cold face, star-sweet on a gloom profound;  
Womanlike, taking revenge too deep for a transient wrong  
Done but in thought to your beauty, and ever as pale as before  
Growing and fading and growing upon me without a sound,  
Luminous, gemlike, ghostlike, deathlike, half the night long  
Growing and fading and growing, till I could bear it no more,

But arose, and all by myself in my own dark garden ground,  
 Listening now to the tide in its broad-hung shipwrecking roar.  
 Now to the scream of a madden'd beach dragg'd down by the wave,  
 Walk'd in a wintry wind by a ghastly glimmer, and found  
 The shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave.

## IV.

## I.

A MILLION emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime  
 In the little grove where I sit—ah, wherefore cannot I be  
 Like things of the season gay, like the bountiful season bland.  
 When the far-off sail is blown by the breeze of a softer clime,  
 Half-lost in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of sea,  
 The silent sapphire-spangled marriage ring of the land?

## II.

Below me, there, is the village, and looks how quiet and small!  
 And yet bubbles o'er like a city, with gossip, scandal, and spite;  
 And Jack on his ale-house bench has as many lies as a Czar;  
 And here on the landward side, by a red rock, glimmers the Hall;  
 And up in the high Hall-garden I see her pass like a light;  
 But sorrow seize me if ever that light be my leading star!

## III.

When have I bow'd to her father, the wrinkled head of the race?  
 I met her to-day with her brother, but not to her brother I bow'd:  
 I bow'd to his lady-sister as she rode by on the moor;  
 But the fire of a foolish pride flash'd over her beautiful face.  
 O child, you wrong your beauty, believe it, in being so proud;  
 Your father has wealth well-gotten, and I am nameless and poor.

## IV.

I keep but a man and a maid, ever ready to slander and steal;  
 I know it, and smile a hard-set smile, like a stoic, or like  
 A wiser epicurean, and let the world have its way:  
 For nature is one with rapine, a harm no preacher can heal;  
 The Mayfly is torn by the swallow, the sparrow spear'd by the shrike  
 And the whole little wood where I sit is a world of plunder and prey.

## V.

We are puppets, Man in his pride, and Beauty fair in her flower;  
 Do we move ourselves, or are moved by an unseen hand at a game  
 That pushes us off from the board, and others ever succeed?  
 Ah yet, we cannot be kind to each other here for an hour;  
 We whisper, and hint, and chuckle, and grin at a brother's shame  
 However we brave it out, we men are a little breed.

## VI.

A monstrous eft was of old the Lord and Master of Earth,  
 For him did his high sun flame, and his river billowing ran,  
 And he felt himself in his force to be Nature's crowning race.  
 As nine months go to the shaping an infant ripe for his birth,  
 So many a million of ages have gone to the making of man:  
 He now is first, but is he the last? is he not too base?

## VII.

The man of science himself is fonder of glory, and vain,  
 An eye well-practised in nature, a spirit bounded and poor;  
 The passionate heart of the poet is whirl'd into folly and vice.  
 I would not marvel at either, but keep a temperate brain;  
 For not to desire or admire, if a man could learn it, were more  
 Than to walk all day like the sultan of old in a garden of spice.

## \* VIII.

For the drift of the Maker is dark, an Isis hid by the veil.  
 Who knows the ways of the world, how God will bring them about?  
 Our planet is one, the suns are many, the world is wide.  
 Shall I weep if a Poland fail? shall I shriek if a Hungary fail?  
 Or an infant civilization be ruled with rod or with knout?  
 I have not made the world, and He that made it will guide.

IX.

Be mine a philosopher's life in the quiet woodland ways,  
Where if I cannot be gay let a passionless peace be my lot,  
Far-off from the clamor of liars belied in the hubbub of lies;  
From the long-neck'd geese of the world that are ever hissing dispraise  
Because their natures are little, and, whether he heed it or not,  
Where each man walks with his head in a cloud of poisonous flies.

X.

And most of all would I flee from the cruel madness of love,  
The honey of poison-flowers and all the measureless ill.  
Ah Maud, you milkwhite fawn, you are all unmeet for a wife.  
Your mother is mute in her grave as her image in marble above;  
Your father is ever in London, you wander about at your will;  
You have but fed on the roses, and lain in the lilies of life.

V.

I.

▲ VOICE by the cedar tree,  
In the meadow under the Hall!  
She is singing an air that is known to  
me,  
A passionate ballad gallant and gay,  
A martial song like a trumpet's call!  
Singing alone in the morning of life,  
In the happy morning of life and of  
May,  
Singing of men that in battle array,  
Ready in heart and ready in hand,  
March with banner and bugle and fife  
To the death, for their native land.

II.

Maud with her exquisite face,  
And wild voice pealing up to the sun-  
ny sky,  
And feet like sunny gems on an Eng-  
lish green,  
Maud in the light of her youth and her  
grace,  
Singing of Death, and of Honor that  
cannot die,  
Till I well could weep for a time so  
sordid and mean,  
And myself so languid and base.

III.

Silence, beautiful voice  
Be still, for you only trouble the mind  
With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,  
A glory I shall not find.  
Still! I will hear you no more,  
For your sweetness hardly leaves me a  
choice  
But to move to the meadow and fall  
before  
Her feet on the meadow grass, and  
adore,  
Not her, who is neither courtly nor  
kind,  
Not her, not her, but a voice.

VI.

I.

MORNING arises stormy and pale,  
No sun, but a wannish glare  
In fold upon fold of hueless cloud,

And the budded peaks of the wood are  
bow'd  
Caught and cuff'd by the gale:  
I had fancied it would be fair.

II.

Whom but Maud should I meet  
Last night, when the sunset burn'd  
On the blossom'd gable-ends  
At the head of the village street,  
Whom but Maud should I meet?  
And she touch'd my hand with a smile  
so sweet  
She made me divine amends  
For a courtesy not return'd.

III.

And thus a delicate spark  
Of glowing and growing light  
Thro' the livelong hours of the dark  
Kept itself warm in the heart of my  
dreams,  
Ready to burst in a color'd flame;  
Till at last when the morning came  
In a cloud, it faded, and seems  
But an ashen-gray delight.

IV.

What if with her sunny hair,  
And smile as sunny as cold,  
She meant to weave me a snare  
Of some coquettish deceit,  
Cleopatra-like as of old  
To entangle me when we met,  
To have her lion roll in a silken net  
And fawn at a victor's feet.

V.

Ah, what shall I be at fifty  
Should Nature keep me alive,  
If I find the world so bitter  
When I am but twenty-five?  
Yet, if she were not a cheat,  
If Maud were all that she seem'd,  
And her smile were all that I dream'd  
Then the world were not so bitter  
But a smile could make it sweet.

VI.

What if tho' her eye seem'd full  
Of a kind intent to me,  
What if that dandy-despot, he,  
That jewell'd mass of millinery,  
That oil'd and curl'd Assyrian Bull  
Smelling of musk and of insolence

Her brother, from whom I keep aloof,  
 Who wants the finer politic sense  
 To mask, tho' but in his own behoof,  
 With a glassy smile his brutal scorn—  
 What if he had told her yesternorn  
 How prettily for his own sweet sake  
 A face of tenderness might be feign'd,  
 And a moist mirage in desert eyes,  
 That so, when the rotten husings  
 shake,  
 In another month to his brazen lies,  
 A wretched vote may be gain'd.

## VII.

For a raven ever croaks, at my side,  
 Keep watch and ward, keep watch and  
 ward,  
 Or thou wilt prove their tool.  
 Yea too, myself from myself I guard,  
 For often a man's own angry pride  
 Is cap and bells for a fool.

## VIII.

Perhaps the smile and tender tone  
 Came out of her pitying womanhood,  
 For am I not, am I not, here alone  
 So many a summer since she died,  
 My mother, who was so gentle and  
 good?  
 Living alone in an empty house,  
 Here half-hid in the gleaming wood,  
 Where I hear the dead at midday moan,  
 And the shrieking rush of the wainseot  
 mouse,  
 And my own sad name in corners cried,  
 When the shiver of dancing leaves is  
 thrown  
 About its echoing chambers wide,  
 Till a morbid hate and horror have  
 grown  
 Of a world in which I have hardly  
 mixt,  
 And a morbid eating lichen fixt,  
 On a heart half-turn'd to stone.

## IX.

O heart of stone, are you flesh, and  
 caught  
 By that you swore to withstand?  
 For what was it else within me wrought  
 But, I fear, the new strong wine of  
 love,  
 That made my tongue so stammer and  
 trip  
 When I saw the treasured splendor,  
 her hand,  
 Come sliding out of her sacred glove,  
 And the sunlight broke from her lip?

## X.

I have play'd with her when a child,  
 She remembers it now we meet.  
 Ah well, well, well, I *may* be beguiled  
 By some coquettish deceit.  
 Yet, if she were not a cheat,  
 If Maud were all that she seem'd,  
 And her smile had all that I dream'd,  
 Then the world were not so bitter  
 But a smile could make it sweet.

## VII.

## I.

DID I hear it half in a doze,  
 Long since, I know not *where*?  
 Did I dream it an hour ago,  
 When asleep in this arm-chair?

## II.

Men were drinking together,  
 Drinking and talking of me;  
 "Well, if it prove a girl, the boy  
 Will have plenty: so let it be."

## III.

Is it an echo of something  
 Read with a boy's delight,  
 Viziers nodding together  
 'In some Arabian night?

## IV.

Strange, that I hear two men,  
 Somewhere, talking of me;  
 "Well, if it prove a girl, my boy  
 Will have plenty: so let it be."

## VIII.

## I.

SHE came to the village church,  
 And sat by a pillar alone;  
 An angel watching an urn  
 Wept over her, carved in stone;  
 And once, but once, she lifted her eyes,  
 And suddenly, sweetly, strangely  
 blush'd  
 To find they were met by my own;  
 And suddenly, sweetly, my heart beat  
 stronger  
 And thicker, until I heard no longer  
 The snowy-banded, dilettante,  
 Delicate-handed priest intone;  
 And thought, is it pride, and mused  
 and sigh'd  
 "No surely, now it cannot be pride."

## IX.

I WAS walking a mile,  
 More than a mile from the shore,  
 The sun look'd out with a smile  
 Betwixt the cloud and the moor,  
 And riding at set of day  
 Over the dark moor land,  
 Rapidly riding far away,  
 She waved to me with her hand.  
 There were two at her side,  
 Something flash'd in the sun,  
 Down by the hill I saw them ride.  
 In a moment they were gone:  
 Like a sudden spark  
 Struck vainly in the night,  
 Then returns the dark  
 With no more hope of light.

## X.

## I.

SICK, am I sick of a jealous dread?  
 Was not one of the two at her side  
 This new-made lord, whose splendor  
 plucks  
 The slavish hat from the villager's  
 head?

Whose old grandfather has lately  
died,  
Gone to a blacker pit, for whom  
Grimy nakedness dragging his trucks  
And laying his trams in a poison'd  
gloom  
Wrought, till he crept from a gutted  
mine  
Master of half a servile shire,  
And left his coal all turn'd into gold  
To a grandson, first of his noble line,  
Rich in the grace all women desire,  
Strong in the power that all men adore,  
And simper and set their voices lower,  
And soften as if to a girl, and hold  
A we-stricken breaths at a work divine,  
Seeing his gewgaw castle shine,  
New as his title, built last year,  
There amid perky larches and pine,  
And over the sullen-purple moor  
(Look at it) pricking a cockney ear.

II.

What, has he found my jewel out?  
For one of the two that rode at her side  
Bound for the Hall, I am sure was he:  
Bound for the Hall, and I think for a  
bride.  
Blithe would her brother's acceptance  
be.  
Maud could be gracious too, no doubt,  
To a lord, a captain, a padded shape,  
A bought commission, a waxen face,  
A rabbit mouth that is ever agape—  
Bought? what is it he cannot buy?  
And therefore splenetic, personal, base,  
A wounded thing with a rancorous cry,  
At war with myself and a wretched  
race,  
Sick, sick to the heart of life, am I.

III.

Last week came one to the county town,  
To preach our poor little army down,  
And play the game of the despot kings,  
Tho' the state has done it and thrice as  
well:  
This broad-brimm'd hawker of holy  
things,  
Whose ear is cramm'd with his cotton,  
and rings  
Even in dreams to the chink of his  
pence,  
This huckster put down war! can he  
tell  
Whether war be a cause or a conse-  
quence?  
Put down the passions that make earth  
Hell!  
Down with ambition, avarice, pride,  
Jealousy, down! cut off from the mind  
The bitter springs of anger and fear;  
Down too, down at your own fireside,  
With the evil tongue and the evil ear,  
For each is at war with mankind.

IV.

I wish I could hear again  
The chivalrous battle-song  
That she warbled alone in her joy!

I might persuade myself then  
She would not do herself this great  
wrong,  
To take a wanton dissolute boy  
For a man and leader of men.

V.

Ah God, for a man with heart, head,  
hand,  
Like some of the simple great ones  
gone  
For ever and ever by.  
One still strong man in a blatant land,  
Whatever they call him, what care I,  
Aristocrat, democrat, autocrat,—one  
Who can rule and dare not lie.

VI.

And ah for a man to arise in me,  
That the man I am may cease to be!

XI.

I.

O LET the solid ground  
Not fall beneath my feet  
Before my life has found  
What some have found so sweet;  
Then let come what come may,  
What matter if I go mad,  
I shall have had my day.

II.

Let the sweet heavens endure,  
Not close and darken above me  
Before I am quite quite sure  
That there is one to love me;  
Then let come what come may  
To a life that has been so sad,  
I shall have had my day.

XII.

I.

BIRDS in the high Hall-garden  
When twilight was falling,  
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,  
They were crying and calling.

II.

Where was Maud? in our wood;  
And I, who else, was with her,  
Gathering woodland lilies,  
Myriads blow together.

III.

Birds in our wood sang  
Ringing thro' the valleys,  
Maud is here, here, here  
In among the lilies.

IV.

I kiss'd her slender hand,  
She took the kiss sedately;  
Maud is not seventeen,  
But she is tall and stately.

V.

I to cry out on pride  
Who have won her favor!  
O Maud were sure of Heaven  
If lowliness could save her.

VI.

I know the way she went  
Home with her maiden posy,

For her feet have touch'd the meadows  
And left the daisies rosy.

## VII.

Birds in the high Hall-garden  
Were crying and calling to her,  
Where is Maud, Maud, Maud,  
One is come to woo her.

## VIII.

Look, a horse at the door,  
And little King Charley snarling.  
Go back, my lord, across the moor,  
You are not her darling.

## XIII.

## I.

SCORN'D, to be scorn'd by one that I  
scorn,

Is that a matter to make me fret?  
That a calamity hard to be borne?  
Well, he may live to hate me yet.  
Fool that I am to be vext with his  
pride!

I past him, I was crossing his lands;  
He stood on the path a little aside;  
His face, as I grant, in spite of spite,  
Has a broad-blown comeliness, red  
and white,  
And six feet two, as I think, he stands;  
But his essences turn'd the live air sick,  
And barbarous opulence jewel-thick  
Sunn'd itself on his breast and his  
hands.

## II.

Who shall call me ungentle, unfair,  
I long'd so heartily then and there  
To give him the grasp of fellowship;  
But while I past he was humming an  
air,  
Stopt, and then with a riding whip  
Leisurely tapping a glossy boot,  
And curving a contumelious lip,  
Gorgonized me from head to foot  
With a stony British stare.

## III.

Why sits he here in his father's chair?  
That old man never comes to his place:  
Shall I believe him ashamed to be seen?  
For only once, in the village street,  
Last year, I caught a glimpse of his  
face,  
A gray old wolf and a lean.  
Scarcely, now, would I call him a  
cheat;

For then, perhaps, as a child of deceit,  
She might by a true descent be un-  
true;

And Maud is as true as Maud is sweet;  
Tho' I fancy her sweetness only due  
To the sweeter blood by the other side;  
Her mother has been a thing complete,  
However she came to be so allied.  
And fair without, faithful within,  
Maud to him is nothing akin:  
Some peculiar mystic grace  
Made her only the child of her mother,  
And heap'd the whole inherited sin  
On that huge scapegoat of the race,  
All, all upon the brother.

## IV.

Peace, angry spirit, and let him be!  
Has not his sister smiled on me?

## XIV.

## I.

MAUD has a garden of roses  
And lilies fair on a lawn;  
There she walks in her state  
And tends upon bed and bower,  
And thither I climb'd at dawn  
And stood by her garden-gate;  
A lion ramps at the top,  
He is clasp't by a passion-flower.

## II.

Maud's own little oak-room  
(Which Maud, like a precious stone  
Set in the heart of the carven gloom,  
Lights with herself, when alone  
She sits by her music and books,  
And her brother lingers late  
With a roystering company) looks  
Upon Maud's own garden-gate:  
And I thought as I stood, if a hand, as  
white  
As ocean-foam in the moon, were laid  
On the hasp of the window, and my  
Delight  
Had a sudden desire, like a glorious  
ghost, to glide,  
Like a beam of the seventh Heaven,  
down to my side,  
There were but a step to be made.

## III.

The fancy flatter'd my mind,  
And again seem'd overbold;  
Now I thought that she cared for me,  
Now I thought she was kind  
Only because she was cold.

## IV.

I heard no sound where I stood  
But the rivulet on from the lawn  
Running down to my own dark wood;  
Or the voice of the long sea-wave as it  
swell'd  
Now and then in the dim-gray dawn;  
But I look'd, and round, all round the  
house I beheld  
The death-white curtain drawn;  
Felt a horror over me creep,  
Prickle my skin and catch my breath,  
Knew that the death-white curtain  
meant but sleep,  
Yet I shudder'd and thought like a  
fool of the sleep of death.

## XV.

So dark a mind within me dwells,  
And I make myself such evil cheer,  
That if I be dear to some one else,  
Then some one else may have much  
to fear;  
But if I be dear to some one else,  
Then I should be to myself more  
dear.  
Shall I not take care of all that I  
think,

Yea ev'n of wretched meat and drink,  
If I be dear,  
If I be dear to some one else ?

## XVI.

## I.

THIS lump of earth has left his estate  
The lighter by the loss of his weight ;  
And so that he find what he went to  
seek,  
And fulsome Pleasure clog him, and  
drown  
His heart in the gross mud-honey of  
town,  
He may stay for a year who has gone  
for a week :  
But this is the day when I must speak,  
And I see my Oread coming down,  
O this is the day !  
O beautiful creature, what am I  
That I dare to look her way ;  
Think I may hold dominion sweet,  
Lord of the pulse that is lord of her  
breast,  
And dream of her beauty with tender  
dread,  
From the delicate Arab arch of her  
feet  
To the grace that, bright and light as  
the crest  
Of a peacock, sits on her shining head,  
And she knows it not : O, if she knew  
it,  
To know her beauty might half undo it.  
I know it the one bright thing to save  
My yet young life in the wilds of Time,  
Perhaps from madness, perhaps from  
crime,  
Perhaps from a selfish grave.

## II.

What, if she be fasten'd to this fool  
lord,  
Dare I bid her abide by her word ?  
Should I love her so well if she  
Had given her word to a thing so low ?  
Shall I love her as well if she  
Can break her word were it even for  
me ?  
I trust that it is not so.

## III.

Catch not my breath, O clamorous  
heart,  
Let not my tongue be a thrall to my  
eye,  
For I must tell her before we part,  
I must tell her, or die.

## XVII.

Go not, happy day,  
From the shining fields,  
Go not, happy day,  
Till the maiden yields.  
Rosy is the West,  
Rosy is the South,  
Roses are her cheeks,  
And a rose her mouth.  
When the happy Yes  
Falters from her lips,  
Pass and blush the news

O'er the blowing ships.  
Over blowing seas,  
Over seas at rest,  
Pass the happy news,  
Blush it thro' the West ;  
Till the red man dance  
By his red cedar tree,  
And the red man's babe  
Leap, beyond the sea.  
Blush from West to East,  
Blush from East to West,  
Till the West is East,  
Blush it thro' the West.  
Rosy is the West,  
Rosy is the South,  
Roses are her cheeks,  
And a rose her mouth.

## XVIII.

## I.

I have led her home, my love, my only  
friend.  
There is none like her, none.  
And never yet so warmly ran my blood  
And sweetly, on and on  
Calming itself to the long-wish'd-for  
end,  
Full to the banks, close on the prom-  
ised good.

## II.

None like her, none.  
Just now the dry-tongued laurels' pat-  
tering talk  
Seem'd her light foot along the garden  
walk,  
And shook my heart to think she  
comes once more ;  
But even then I heard her close the  
door,  
The gates of Heaven are closed, and  
she is gone.

## III.

There is none like her, none.  
Nor will be when our summers have  
deceased.  
O, art thou sighing for Lebanon  
In the long breeze that streams to thy  
delicious East,  
Sighing for Lebanon,  
Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have here  
increased,  
Upon a pastoral slope as fair,  
And looking to the South, and fed  
With honey'd rain and delicate air,  
And haunted by the starry head  
Of her whose gentle will has changed  
my fate,  
And made my life a perfumed altar-  
flame ;  
And over whom thy darkness must  
have spread  
With such daylight as theirs of old,  
thy great  
Forefathers of the thornless garden,  
there  
Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from  
whom she came.

## IV.

Here will I lie, while these long  
branches sway,  
And you fair stars that crown a happy  
day  
Go in and out as if at merry play,  
Who am no more so all forlorn,  
As when it seem'd far better to be born  
To labor and the mattock-harden'd  
hand,  
Than nursed at ease and brought to  
understand  
A sad astrology, the boundless plan  
That makes you tyrants in your iron  
skies,  
Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,  
Cold fires, yet with power to burn and  
brand  
His nothingness into man.

## V.

But now shine on, and what care I,  
Who in this stormy gulf have found a  
pearl  
The countercharm of space and hollow  
sky,  
And do accept my madness, and would  
die  
To save from some slight shame one  
simple girl.

## VI.

Would die ; for sullen-seeming Death  
may give  
More life to Love than is or ever was  
In our low world, where yet 't is sweet  
to live.  
Let no one ask me how it came to pass;  
It seems that I am happy, that to me  
A livelier emerald twinkles in the  
grass,  
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

## VII.

Not die; but live a life of truest breath,  
And teach true life to fight with mortal  
wrongs.  
O, why should Love, like men in drink-  
ing songs.  
Spice his fair banquet with the dust of  
death ?  
Make answer, Maud my bliss,  
Maud made my Maud by that long  
lover's kiss,  
Life of my life, wilt thou not answer  
this ?  
"The dusky strand of Death inwoven  
here  
With dear Love's tie, makes Love him-  
self more dear."

## VIII.

Is that enchanted moan only the swell  
Of the long waves that roll in yonder  
bay ?  
And hark the clock within, the silver  
knell  
Of twelve sweet hours that past in  
bridal white,  
And died to live, long as my pulses  
play ;

But now by this my love has closed  
her sight  
And given false death her hand, and  
stol'n away  
To dreamful wastes where footless  
fancies dwell  
Among the fragments of the golden  
day.  
May nothing there her maiden grace  
affright !  
Dear heart, I feel with thee the drowsy  
spell.  
My bride to be, my evermore delight,  
My own heart's heart and ownest own  
farewell ;  
It is but for a little space I go :  
And ye meanwhile far over moor and  
fell  
Beat to the noiseless music of the  
night !  
Has our whole earth gone nearer to the  
glow  
Of your soft splendors that you look so  
bright ?  
I have climb'd nearer out of lonely  
Hell.  
Beat, happy stars, timing with things  
below,  
Beat with my heart more blest than  
heart can tell,  
Blest, but for some dark undercurrent  
woe  
That seems to draw—but it shall not  
be so :  
Let all be well, be well.

## XIX.

## I.

HER brother is coming back to-night,  
Breaking up my dream of delight.

## II.

My dream ? do I dream of bliss ?  
I have walk'd awake with Truth.  
O when did a morning shine  
So rich in atonement as this  
For my dark-dawning youth,  
Darken'd watching a mother decline  
And that dead man at her heart and  
mine :  
For who was left to watch her but I ?  
Yet so did I let my freshness die.

## III.

I trust that I did not talk  
To gentle Maud in our walk  
(For often in lonely wanderings  
I have cursed him even to lifeless  
things)  
But I trust that I did not talk,  
Not touch on her father's sin :  
I am sure I did but speak  
Of my mother's faded cheek  
When it slowly grew so thin,  
That I felt she was slowly dying  
Vext with lawyers and harass'd with  
debt :  
For how often I caught her with eyes  
all wet,

Shaking her head at her son and sigh-  
ing  
A world of trouble within !

IV.

And Maud too, Maud was moved  
To speak of the mother she loved  
As one scarce less forlorn,  
Dying abroad and it seems apart  
From him who had ceased to share her  
heart,

And ever mourning over the feud,  
The household Fury sprinkled with  
blood

By which our houses are torn :  
How strange was what she said,  
When only Maud and the brother  
Hung over her dying bed—  
That Maud's dark father and mine  
Had bound us one to the other,  
Betrothed us over their wine,  
On the day when Maud was born ;  
Seal'd her mine from her first sweet  
breath.

Mine, mine by a right, from birth till  
death,

Mine, mine—our fathers have sworn.

V.

But the true blood spilt had in it a  
heat

To dissolve the precious seal on a bond,  
That, if left uncancell'd, had been so  
sweet :

And none of us thought of a something  
beyond,

A desire that awoke in the heart of the  
child,

As it were a duty done to the tomb,  
To be friends for her sake, to be recon-  
ciled ;

And I was cursing them and my doom,  
And letting a dangerous thought run  
wild

While often abroad in the fragrant  
gloom

Of foreign churches—I see her there,  
Bright English lily, breathing a prayer  
To be friends, to be reconciled !

VI.

But then what a flint is he !

Abroad, at Florence, at Rome,  
I find whenever she touch'd on me  
This brother had laugh'd her down,  
And at last, when each came home,  
He had darken'd into a frown,  
Chid her, and forbid her to speak  
To me, her friend of the years before ;  
And this was what had reddened her  
cheek

When I bow'd to her on the moor.

VII.

Yet Maud, altho' not blind  
To the faults of his heart and mind  
I see she cannot but love him,  
And says he is rough but kind,  
And wishes me to approve him,  
And tells me, when she lay  
Sick once, with a fear of worse,

That he left his wine and horses and  
play,  
Sat with her, read to her, night and day,  
And tended her like a nurse.

VIII.

Kind ? but the deathbed desire  
Spurn'd by this heir of the liar—  
Rough but kind ? yet I know  
He has plotted against me in this,  
That he plots against me still.  
Kind to Maud ? that were not amiss.  
Well, rough but kind ; why let it be so :  
For shall not Maud have her will ?

IX.

For, Maud, so tender and true,  
As long as my life endures  
I feel I shall owe you a debt,  
That I never can hope to pay ;  
And if ever I should forget  
That I owe this debt to you  
And for your sweet sake to yours ;  
O then, what then shall I say ?—  
If ever I should forget,  
May God make me more wretched  
Than ever I have been yet !

X.

So now I have sworn to bury  
All this dead body of hate,  
I feel so free and so clear  
By the loss of that dead weight,  
That I should grow light-headed, I fear.  
Fantastically merry ;  
But that her brother comes, like a  
blight  
On my fresh hope, to the Hall to-night.

XX.

I.

STRANGE, that I felt so gay,  
Strange, that I tried to-day  
To beguile her melancholy ;  
The Sultan, as we name him,—  
She did not wish to blame him  
But he vexed her and perplexed her  
With his worldly talk and folly :  
Was it gentle to reprove her  
For stealing out of view  
From a little lazy lover  
Who but claims her as his due ?  
Or for chilling his caresses  
By the coldness of her manners,  
Nay, the plainness of her dresses ?  
Now I know her but in two,  
Nor can pronounce upon it  
If one should ask me whether  
The habit, hat, and feather,  
Or the frock and gypsy bonnet  
Be the neater and completer ;  
For nothing can be sweeter  
Than maiden Maud in either.

II.

But to-morrow, if we live,  
Our ponderous squire will give  
A grand political dinner  
To half the squirlings near ;  
And Maud will wear her jewels,

And the bird of prey will hover,  
And the titmouse hope to win her  
With his chirrup at her ear

## III.

A grand political dinner  
To the men of many acres,  
A gathering of the Tory,  
A dinner and then a dance  
For the maids and marriage-makers,  
And every eye but mine will glance  
At Maud in all her glory.

## IV.

For I am not invited,  
But, with the Sultan's pardon,  
I am all as well delighted,  
For I know her own rose garden,  
And mean to linger in it  
Till the dancing will be over;  
And then, O then, come out to me  
For a minute, but for a minute,  
Come out to your own true lover  
That your true lover may see  
Your glory also, and render  
All homage to his own darling,  
Queen Maud in all her splendor.

## XXI.

RIVULET crossing my ground,  
And bringing me down from the Hall  
This garden-rose that I found,  
Forgetful of Maud and me,  
And lost in trouble and moving round  
Here at the head of a tinkling fall,  
And trying to pass to the sea;  
O Rivulet, born at the Hall,  
My Maud has sent it by thee  
(If I read her sweet will right)  
On a blushing mission to me,  
Saying in odor and color, "Ah, be  
Among the roses to-night."

## XXII.

## I.

COME into the garden, Maud,  
For the black bat, night, has flown,  
Come into the garden, Maud,  
I am here at the gate alone;  
And the woodbine spices are wafted  
abroad,  
And the musk of the roses blown

## II.

For a breeze of morning moves,  
And the planet of Love is on high,  
Beginning to faint in the light that she  
loves  
On a bed of daffodil sky,  
To faint in the light of the sun she  
loves,  
To faint in his light, and to die.

## III.

All night have the roses heard  
The flute, violin, bassoon;  
All night has the casement jessamine  
stirr'd  
To the dancers dancing in tune;  
Till a silence fell with the waking  
bird,  
And a hush with the setting moon.

## IV.

I said to the lily, "There is but one  
With whom she has heart to be gay.  
When will the dancers leave her alone?  
She is weary of dance and play."  
Now half to the setting moon are gone,  
And half to the rising day;  
Low on the sand and loud on the stone  
The last wheel echoes away.

## V.

I said to the rose, "The brief night  
goes  
In babble and revel and wine.  
O young lord-lover, what sighs are  
those,  
For one that will never be thine?  
But mine, but mine," so I swear to the  
rose,  
"For ever and ever, mine."

## VI.

And the soul of the rose went into my  
blood,  
As the music clash'd in the hall;  
And long by the garden lake I stood,  
For I heard your rivulet fall  
From the lake to the meadow and on to  
the wood,  
Our wood, that is dearer than all;

## VII.

From the meadow your walks have left  
so sweet  
That whenever a March-wind sighs  
He sets the jewel-print of your feet  
In violets blue as your eyes,  
To the woody hollows in which we  
meet  
And the valleys of Paradise.

## VIII.

The slender acacia would not shake  
One long milk-bloom on the tree;  
The white lake-blossom fell into the  
lake  
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;  
But the rose was awake all night for  
your sake,  
Knowing your promise to me;  
The lilies and roses were all awake,  
They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

## IX.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of  
girls,  
Come hither, the dances are done,  
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,  
Queen lily and rose in one;  
Shine out, little head, sunning over  
with curls,  
To the flowers, and be their sun.

## X.

There has fallen a splendid tear  
From the passion-flower at the gate.  
She is coming, my dove, my dear;  
She is coming, my life, my fate;  
The red rose cries, "She is near, she is  
near;"  
And the white rose weeps, "She is  
late;"

The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;"  
And the lily whispers, "I wait."

## XI.

She is coming, my own, my sweet,  
Were it ever so airy a tread,  
My heart would hear her and beat,  
Were it earth in an earthy bed;  
My dust would hear her and beat,  
Had I lain for a century dead;  
Would start and tremble under her  
feet,  
And blossom in purple and red.

## XXIII.

## I.

"The fault was mine, the fault was  
mine"—  
Why am I sitting here so stunn'd and  
still,  
Plucking the harmless wild-flower on  
the hill?—  
It is this guilty hand!—  
And there rises ever a passionate cry  
From underneath in the darkening  
land—  
What is it, that has been done?  
O dawn of Eden bright over earth and  
sky,  
The fires of Hell brake out of thy ris-  
ing sun,  
The fires of Hell and of Hate;  
For she, sweet soul, had hardly spoken  
a word,  
When her brother ran in his rage to  
the gate,  
He came with the babe-faced lord;  
Heap'd on her terms of disgrace,  
And while she wept, and I strove to be  
cool,  
He fiercely gave me the lie,  
Till I with as fierce an anger spoke,  
And he struck me, madman, over the  
face,  
Struck me before the languid fool,  
Who was gaping an grinning by:  
Struck for himself an evil stroke;  
Wrought for his house an irredeemable  
woe;  
For front to front in an hour we stood,  
And a million horrible bellowing  
echoes broke  
From the red-ribb'd hollow behind the  
wood,  
And thunder'd up into Heaven the  
Christless code,  
That must have life for a blow.  
Ever and ever afresh they seem'd to  
grow.  
Was it he lay there with a fading eye?  
"The fault was mine," he whisper'd,  
"fly!"  
Then glided out of the joyous wood  
The ghastly Wraith of one that I  
know;  
And there rang on a sudden a passion-  
ate cry,  
A cry for a brother's blood:  
It will ring in my heart and my ears,  
till I die, till I die.

## II.

Is it gone? my pulses beat—  
What was it? a lying trick of the  
brain?  
Yet I thought I saw her stand,  
A shadow there at my feet,  
High over the shadowy land:  
It is gone; and the heavens fall in a  
gentle rain,  
When they should burst and drown  
with deluging storms  
The feeble vassals of wine and anger  
and lust,  
The little hearts that know not how to  
forgive:  
Arise, my God, and strike, for we hold  
Thee just,  
Strike dead the whole weak race of  
venomous worms,  
That sting each other here in the dust;  
We are not worthy to live.

## XXIV.

## I.

SEE what a lovely shell,  
Small and pure as a pearl,  
Lying close to my foot,  
Frail, but a work divine,  
Made so fairly well  
With delicate spire and whorl,  
How exquisitely minute,  
A miracle of design!

## II.

What is it? a learned man  
Could give it a clumsy name.  
Let him name it who can,  
The beauty would be the same.

## III.

The tiny cell is forlorn,  
Void of the little living will  
That made it stir on the shore.  
Did he stand at the diamond door  
Of his house in a rainbow frill?  
Did he push, when he was uncurl'd  
A golden foot or a fairy horn  
Thro' his dim water-world?

## IV.

SLight, to be crush'd with a tap  
Of my finger-nail on the sand,  
Small, but a work divine,  
Frail, but of force to withstand,  
Year upon year, the shock  
Of cataract seas that snap  
The three-decker's oaken spine  
Athwart the ledges of rock,  
Here on the Breton strand!

## V.

Breton, not Briton; here  
Like a shipwreck'd man on a coast  
Of ancient fable and fear—  
Plagued with a flitting to and fro,  
A disease, a hard mechanic ghost  
That never came from on high  
Nor ever arose from below,  
But only moves with the moving eye,

Flying along the land and the main—  
Why should it look like Maud?  
Am I to be overawed  
By what I cannot but know  
Is a juggle born of the brain?

## VI.

Back from the Breton coast,  
Sick of a nameless fear,  
Back to the dark sea-line  
Looking, thinking of all I have lost;  
An old song vexes my ear;  
But that of Lamech is mine.

## VII.

For years, a measureless ill,  
For years, for ever, to part—  
But she, she would love me still;  
And as long, O God, as she  
Have a grain of love for me,  
So long, no doubt, no doubt,  
Shall I nurse in my dark heart,  
However weary, a spark of will  
Not to be trampled out.

## VIII.

Strange, that the mind, when fraught  
With a passion so intense  
One would think that it well  
Might drown all life in the eye,—  
That it should, by being so over-  
wrought.  
Suddenly strike on a sharper sense  
For a shell, or a flower, little things  
Which else would have been past by!  
And now I remember, I,  
When he lay dying there,  
I noticed one of his many rings  
(For he had many, poor worm) and  
thought  
It is his mother's hair.

## IX.

Who knows if he be dead?  
Whether I need have fled?  
Am I guilty of blood?  
However this may be,  
Comfort her, comfort her, all things  
good,  
While I am over the sea!  
Let me and my passionate love go by,  
But speak to her all things holy and  
high,  
Whatever happen to me!  
Me and my harmful love go by;  
But come to her waking, find her  
asleep,  
Powers of the height, Powers of the  
deep,  
And comfort her tho' I die.

## XXV.

COURAGE, poor heart of stone!  
I will not ask thee why  
Thou canst not understand  
That thou art left for ever alone:  
Courage, poor stupid heart of stone.—  
Or if I ask thee why,  
Care not thou to reply:

She is but dead, and the time is at hand  
When thou shalt more than die.

## XXVI.

## I.

O THAT 'twere possible  
After long grief and pain  
To find the arms of my true love  
Round me once again!

## II.

When I was wont to meet her  
In the silent woody places  
By the home that gave me birth,  
We stood tranced in long embraces  
Mixt with kisses sweeter, sweeter  
Than anything on earth.

## III.

A shadow flits before me,  
Not thou, but like to thee;  
Ah Christ, that it were possible  
For one short hour to see  
The souls we loved, that they might  
tell us  
What and where they be.

## IV.

It leads me forth at evening,  
It lightly winds and steals  
In a cold white robe before me,  
When all my spirit reels  
At the shouts, the leagues of lights,  
And the roaring of the wheels.

## V.

Half the night I waste in sighs,  
Half in dreams I sorrow after  
The delight of early skies;  
In a wakeful doze I sorrow  
For the hand, the lips, the eyes,  
For the meeting of the morrow,  
The delight of happy laughter,  
The delight of low replies.

## VI.

'Tis a morning pure and sweet,  
And a dewy splendor falls  
On the little flower that clings  
To the turrets and the walls;  
'Tis a morning pure and sweet,  
And the light and shadow fleet;  
She is walking in the meadow,  
And the woodland echo rings;  
In a moment we shall meet;  
She is singing in the meadow,  
And the rivulet at her feet  
Ripples on in light and shadow  
To the ballad that she sings.

## VII.

Do I hear her sing as of old,  
My bird with the shining head,  
My own dove with the tender eye?  
But there rings on a sudden a passion  
ate cry,  
There is some one dying or dead,  
And a sullen thunder is roll'd;  
For a tumult shakes the city,

And I wake, my dream is fled ;  
In the shuddering dawn, behold,  
Without knowledge, without pity,  
By the curtains of my bed  
That abiding phantom cold.

## VIII.

Get thee hence, nor come again,  
Mix not memory with doubt,  
Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,  
Pass and cease to move about !  
'Tis the blot upon the brain  
That will show itself without.

## IX.

Then I rise, the eavedrops fall,  
And the yellow vapors choke  
The great city sounding wide ;  
The day comes, a dull red ball  
Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke  
On the misty river-tide.

## X.

Thro' the hubbub of the market  
I steal, a wasted frame,  
It crosses here, it crosses there,  
Thro' all that crowd confused and loud,  
The shadow still the same ;  
And on my heavy eyelid  
My anguish hangs like shame.

## XI.

Alas for her that met me,  
That heard me softly call,  
Came glimmering thro' the laurels  
At the quiet evenfall,  
In the garden by the turrets  
Of the old manorial hall.

## XII.

Would the happy spirit descend,  
From the realms of light and song,  
In the chamber or the street,  
As she looks among the blest,  
Should I fear to greet my friend  
Or to say "forgive the wrong,"  
Or to ask her, "take me, sweet,  
To the regions of thy rest ?"

## XIII.

But the broad light glares and beats,  
And the shadow fits and fleets  
And will not let me be ;  
And I loathe the squares and streets,  
And the faces that one meets,  
Hearts with no love for me :  
Always I long to creep  
Into some still cavern deep,  
There to weep, and weep, and weep  
My whole soul out to thee.

## XXVII.

## I.

DEAD, long dead,  
Long dead !  
And my heart is a handful of dust,  
And the wheels go over my head,  
And my bones are shaken with pain,  
For into a shallow grave they are  
thrust,

Only a yard beneath the street,  
And the hoofs of the horses beat, beat,  
The hoofs of the horses beat,  
Beat into my scalp and my brain,  
With never an end to the stream of  
passing feet,

Driving, hurrying ; marrying, burying,  
Clamor and rumble, and ringing and  
clatter.

And here beneath it is all as bad,  
For I thought the dead had peace, but  
it is not so ;

To have no peace in the grave, is that  
not sad ?

But up and down and to and fro,  
Ever about me the dead men go ;  
And then to hear a dead man chatter  
Is enough to drive one mad.

## II.

Wretchedest age, since Time began,  
They cannot even bury a man ;  
And tho' we paid our tithes in the days  
that are gone,  
Not a bell was rung, not a prayer was  
read ;

It is that which makes us loud in the  
world of the dead ;

There is none that does his work, not  
one ;

A touch of their office might have suf-  
ficed,

But the churchmen fain would kill  
their church,

As the churches have kill'd their  
Christ.

## III.

See, there is one of us sobbing,  
No limit to his distress ;  
And another, a lord of all things, pray-  
ing

To his own great self, as I guess ;  
And another, a statesman there, be-  
traying

His party-secret, fool, to the press ;  
And yonder a vile physician, blabbing  
The case of his patient—all for what ?

To tickle the maggot born in an empty  
head,

And wheedle a world that loves him  
not,

For it is but a world of the dead.

## IV.

Nothing but idiot gabble !  
For the prophecy given of old  
And then not understood,  
Has come to pass as foretold ;  
Not let any man think for the public  
good,

But babble, merely for babble.  
For I never whisper'd a private affair  
Within the hearing of cat or mouse,  
No, not to myself in the closet alone,  
But I heard it shouted at once from  
the top of the house ;

Everything came to be known :  
Who told him we were there ?

## V.

Not that gray old wolf, for he came not  
back  
From the wilderness, full of wolves,  
where he used to lie ;  
He has gather'd the bones for his o'er-  
grown whelp to crack ;  
Crack them now for yourself, and howl,  
and die.

## VI.

Prophet, curse me the blabbing lip,  
And curse me the British vermin, the  
rat ;  
I know not whether he came in the  
Hanover ship,  
But I know that he lies and listens  
mute  
In an ancient mansion's crannies and  
holes ;  
Arsenic, arsenic, sure, would do it,  
Except that now we poison our babes,  
poor souls !  
It is all used up for that.

## VII.

Tell him now : she is standing here at  
my head ;  
Not beautiful now, not even kind ;  
He may take her now ; for she never  
speaks her mind,  
But is ever the one thing silent here.  
She is not of us, as I divine ;  
She comes from another stiller world  
of the dead,  
Stiller, not fairer than mine.

## VIII.

But I know where a garden grows,  
Fairer than aught in the world beside,  
All made up of the lily and rose  
That blow by night, when the season is  
good,  
To the sound of dancing music and  
flutes :  
It is only flowers, they had no fruits,  
And I almost fear they are not roses,  
but blood ;  
For the keeper was one, so full of pride,  
He linkt a dead man there to a spectral  
bride ;  
For he, if he had not been a Sultan of  
brutes,  
Would he have that hole in his side ?

## IX.

But what will the old man say ?  
He laid a cruel snare in a pit  
To catch a friend of mine one stormy  
day ;  
Yet now I could even weep to think of  
it ;  
For what will the old man say  
When he comes to the second corpse  
in the pit ?

## X.

Friend, to be struck by the public foe,  
Then to strike him and lay him low,  
That were a public merit, far,  
Whatever the Quaker holds, from sin,

But the red life spilt for a private  
blow—

I swear to you, lawful and lawless war  
Are scarcely even akin.

## XI.

O me, why have they not buried me  
deep enough ?  
Is it kind to have made me a grave so  
rough,  
Me, that was never a quiet sleeper ?  
Maybe still I am but half-dead ;  
Then I cannot be wholly dumb ;  
I will cry to the steps above my head  
And somebody, surely, some kind heart  
will come  
To bury me, bury me  
Deeper, ever so little deeper.

## XXVIII.

## I.

My life has crept so long on a broken  
wing  
Thro' cells of madness, haunts of hor-  
ror and fear,  
That I come to be grateful at last for a  
little thing :  
My mood is changed, for it fell at a  
time of year  
When the face of night is fair on the  
dewy dawns,  
And the shining daffodil dies, and the  
Charioteer  
And starry Gemini hang like glorious  
crowns  
Over Orion's grave low down in the  
west,  
That like a silent lightning under the  
stars  
She seem'd to divide in a dream from  
a band of the blest,  
And spoke of a hope for the world in  
the coming wars—  
"And in that hope, dear soul, let  
trouble have rest,  
Knowing I tarry for thee," and pointed  
to Mars  
As he glow'd like a ruddy shield on the  
Lion's breast.

## II.

And it was but a dream, yet it yielded  
a dear delight  
To have look'd, tho' but in a dream,  
upon eyes so fair,  
That had been in a weary world my one  
thing bright ;  
And it was but a dream, yet it lighten'd  
my despair  
When I thought that a war would arise  
in defence of the right,  
That an iron tyranny now should bend  
or cease,  
The glory of manhood stand on his  
ancient height,  
Nor Britain's one sole God be the mil-  
lionaire :  
No more shall commerce be all in all,  
and Peace

Pipe on her pastoral hillock a languid  
note,  
And watch her harvest ripen, her herd  
increase,  
Nor the cannon-bullet rust on a sloth-  
ful shore,  
And the cobweb woven across the can-  
non's throat  
Shall shake its threaded tears in the  
wind no more.

## III.

And as months ran on and rumor of  
battle grew,  
"It is time, it is time, O passionate  
heart," said I  
(For I cleave to a cause that I felt to be  
pure and true),  
"It is time, O passionate heart and  
morbid eye,  
That old hysterical mock-disease  
should die."  
And I stood on a giant deck and mix'd  
my breath  
With a loyal people shouting a battle  
cry,  
Till I saw the dreary phantom arise  
and fly  
Far into the North, and battle, and  
seas of death.

## IV.

Let it go or stay, so I wake to the  
higher aims  
Of a land that has lost for a little her  
lust of gold,  
And love of a peace that was full of  
wrongs and shames,  
Horrible, hateful, monstrous, not to  
be told;  
And hail once more to the banner of  
battle unroll'd!  
Tho' many a light shall darken, and  
many shall weep  
For those that are crush'd in the clash  
of jarring claims,  
Yet God's just wrath shall be wreak'd  
on a giant liar;  
And many a darkness into the light  
shall leap,  
And shine in the sudden making of  
splendid names,  
And noble thought be freer under the  
sun,  
And the heart of a people beat with  
one desire;  
For the peace, that I deem'd no peace,  
is over and done,  
And now by the side of the Black and  
the Baltic deep,  
And deathful-grinning mouths of the  
fortress, flames  
The blood-red blossom of war with a  
heart of fire.

## V.

Let it flame or fade, and the war roll  
down like a wind,  
We have proved we have hearts in a  
cause, we are noble still,

And myself have awaked, as it seems,  
to the better mind;  
It is better to fight for the good, than  
to rail at the ill;  
I have felt with my native land, I am  
one with my kind,  
I embrace the purpose of God, and the  
doom assign'd.

## THE BROOK;

## AN IDYL.

"HERE, by this brook, we parted; I to  
the East  
And he for Italy—too late—too late;  
One whom the strong sons of the world  
despise;  
For lucky rhymes to him were scrip  
and share,  
And mellow metres more than cent for  
cent;  
Nor could he understand how money  
breeds,  
Thought it a dead thing; yet himself  
could make  
The thing that is not as the thing that  
is.  
O had he lived! In our schoolbooks  
we say,  
Of those that held their heads above  
the crowd,  
They flourish'd then or then, but life  
in him  
Could scarce be said to flourish, only  
touch'd  
On such a time as goes before the leaf,  
When all the wood stands in a mist of  
green,  
And nothing perfect: yet the brook he  
loved,  
For which, in branding summers of  
Bengal,  
Or ev'n the sweet half-English Neil-  
gherry air  
I panted, seems. as I re-listen to it,  
Prattling the primrose fancies of the  
boy,  
To me that loved him; for 'O Brook,'  
he says,  
'O babbling brook,' says Edmund in  
his rhyme,  
'Whence come you?' and the brook,  
why not? replies:  
I come from haunts of coot and hern,  
I make a sudden sally,  
And sparkle out among the fern,  
To bicker down a valley.  
By thirty hills I hurry down,  
Or slip between the ridges,  
By twenty thorps, a little town,  
And half a hundred bridges.  
Till last by Philip's farm I flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go  
But I go on for ever.  
'Poor lad, he died at Florence,  
quite worn out,

Travelling to Naples. There is Darn-  
ley bridge,  
It has more ivy ; there the river ; and  
there  
Stands Philip's farm where brook and  
river meet.

I chatter over stony ways,  
In little sharps and trebles,  
I bubble into eddying bays,  
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret,  
By many a field and fallow,  
And many a fairy foreland set  
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

"But Philip chattered more than  
brook or bird ;  
Old Philip ; all about the fields you  
caught  
His weary daylong chirping, like the  
dry  
High-elbow'd grigs that leap in sum-  
mer grass.

I wind about, and in and out,  
With here a blossom sailing,  
And here and there a lusty trout,  
And here and there a grayling.

And here and there a foamy flake  
Upon me, as I travel  
With many a silvery waterbreak  
Above the golden gravel.

And draw them all along, and flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

"O darling Katie Willows, his one  
child !

A maiden of our century, yet most  
meek ;

A daughter of our meadow, yet not  
coarse,

Straight, but as lissome as a hazel  
wand ;

Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair  
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when  
the shell

Divides threefold to show the fruit  
within.

"Sweet Katie, once I did her a good  
turn,

Her and her far-off cousin and be-  
trothed,

James Willows, of one name and heart  
with her.

For here I came, twenty years back—  
the week

Before I parted with poor Edmund ;  
crost

By that old bridge which, half in ruins  
then,

Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the  
gleam

Beyond it, where the waters marry—  
crost,

Whistling a random bar of Bonny  
Doon,

And push'd at Philip's garden-gate.

The gate,  
Half-parted from a weak and scolding  
hinge,

Stuck ; and he clamor'd from a case-  
ment 'run'

To Katie somewhere in the walks be-  
low,

'Run, Katie !' Katie never ran : she  
moved

To meet me, winding under woodbine  
bowers,

A little flutter'd, with her eyelids down,  
Fresh apple-blossom, blushing for a  
boon.

"What was it ? less of sentiment than  
sense

Had Katie ; not illiterate ; nor of those  
Who dabbling in the fount of fictive

tears,  
And nursed by mealy-mouthed philan-  
thropies,

Divorce the Feeling from her mate the  
Deed.

"She told me. She and James had  
quarrell'd. Why ?

What cause of quarrel ? None, she  
said, no cause ;

James had no cause : but when I prest  
the cause,

I learnt that James had flickering  
jealousies

Which anger'd her. Who anger'd  
James ? I said.

But Katie snatch'd her eyes at once  
from mine,

And sketching with her slender-pointed  
foot

Some figure like a wizard's pentagram  
On garden gravel, let my query pass

Unclaim'd, in flushing silence, till I  
ask'd

If James were coming. 'Coming  
every day,'

She answer'd, 'ever longing to ex-  
plain,

But evermore her father came across  
With some long-winded tale, and broke

him short ;  
And James departed vexed with him  
and her.'

How could I help her ? 'Would I—was  
it wrong ?

(Claspt hands and that petitionary  
grace

Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere  
she spoke)

'O would I take her father for one  
hour,

For one half-hour, and let him talk to  
me !'

And even while she spoke, I saw where  
James

Made toward us, like a wader in the  
surf,

Beyond the brook, waist-deep in  
meadow-sweet.

O Katie, what I suffer'd for your sake !

For in I went, and call'd old Philip  
 out  
 To show the farm: full willingly he  
 rose:  
 He led me thro' the short sweet-smell-  
 ing lanes  
 Of his wheat-suburb, babbling as he  
 went.  
 He praised his land, his horses, his  
 machines;  
 He praised his ploughs, his cows, his  
 hogs, his dogs;  
 He praised his hens, his geese, his  
 guinea-hens;  
 His pigeons, who in session on their  
 roofs  
 Approved him, bowing at their own  
 deserts:  
 Then from the plaintive mother's teat  
 he took  
 Her blind and shuddering puppies,  
 naming each,  
 And naming those, his friends, for  
 whom they were:  
 Then crost the common into Darhley  
 chase  
 To show Sir Arthur's deer. In copse  
 and fern  
 Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail.  
 Then, seated on a serpent-rooted  
 beech,  
 He pointed out a pasturing colt, and  
 said:  
 'That was the four year-old I sold the  
 Squire.'  
 And there he told a long long-winded  
 tale  
 Of how the Squire had seen the colt at  
 grass,  
 And how it was the thing his daughter  
 wish'd,  
 And how he sent the bailiff to the farm  
 To learn the price, and what the price  
 he ask'd,  
 And how the bailiff swore that he was  
 mad,  
 But he stood firm and so the matter  
 hung;  
 He gave them line: and five days after  
 that  
 He met the bailiff at the Golden Fleece,  
 Who then and there had offer'd some-  
 thing more,  
 But he stood firm, and so the matter  
 hung;  
 He knew the man; the colt would fetch  
 its price;  
 He gave them line: and how by chance  
 at last  
 (It might be May or April, he forgot,  
 The last of April or the first of May)  
 He found the bailiff riding by the farm,  
 And, talking from the point he drew  
 him in,  
 And there he mellow'd all his heart  
 with ale,  
 Until they closed a bargain, hand in  
 hand.  
 'Then, while I breathed in sight of  
 haven, he,

Poor fellow, could he help it? recom-  
 menced,  
 And ran thro' all the coltish chronicle,  
 Wild Will, Black Bess, Tantivy, Tal-  
 lyho,  
 Reform, White Rose, Bellerophon, the  
 Jilt,  
 Arbaces, and Phenomenon, and the  
 rest,  
 Till, not to die a listener, I arose,  
 And with me Philip, talking still; and  
 so  
 We turn'd our foreheads from the fall-  
 ing sun,  
 And following our own shadows thrice  
 as long  
 As when they follow'd us from Philip's  
 door,  
 Arrived, and found the sun of sweet  
 content  
 Re-risen in Katie's eyes, and all things  
 well.  
 I steal by lawns and grassy plots,  
 I slide by hazel covers;  
 I move the sweet forget-me-nots  
 That grow for happy lovers.  
 I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,  
 Among my skimming swallows;  
 I make the netted sunbeam dance  
 Against my sandy shallows.  
 I murmur under moon and stars  
 In brambly wildernesses;  
 I linger by my shingly bars;  
 I loiter round my cresses;  
 And out again I curve and flow  
 To join the brimming river,  
 For men may come and men may go,  
 But I go on for ever.  
 Yes, men may come and go; and these  
 are gone,  
 All gone. My dearest brother, Edmund  
 sleeps,  
 Not by the well-known stream and  
 rustic spire,  
 But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome  
 Of Brunelleschi, sleeps in peace: and  
 he,  
 Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste of  
 words  
 Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb:  
 I scraped the lichen from it: Katie  
 walks  
 By the long wash of Australasian seas  
 Far off, and holds her head to other  
 stars,  
 And breathes in converse seasons. All  
 are gone."  
 So Lawrence Aylmer, seated on a  
 style  
 In the long hedge, and rolling in his  
 mind  
 Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing o'er  
 the brook  
 A tansured head in middle age forlorn,  
 Mused, and was mute. On a sudden a  
 low breath  
 Of tender air made tremble in the  
 hedge

The fragile bindweed-bells and briony  
rings;

And he look'd up. There stood a  
maiden near,

Waiting to pass. In much amaze he  
stared

On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair  
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when  
the shell

Divides threefold to show the fruit  
within :

Then, wondering, ask'd her "Are you  
from the farm?"

"Yes" answer'd she. Pray stay a lit-  
tle; pardon me;

What do they call you?" "Katie."  
"That were strange.

What surname?" "Willows." "No!"  
"That is my name."

"Indeed!" and here he look'd so self-  
perplexed,

That Katie laugh'd, and laughing  
blush'd, till he

Laugh'd also, but as one before he  
wakes,

Who feels a glimmering strangeness in  
his dream.

Then looking at her; "Too happy,  
fresh and fair,

Too fresh and fair in our sad world's  
best bloom,

To be the ghost of one who bore your  
name

About these meadows, twenty years  
ago."

"Have you not heard?" said Katie,  
"we came back.

We bought the farm we tenanted be-  
fore.

Am I so like her? so they said on  
board.

Sir, if you knew her in her English  
days,

My mother, as it seems you did, the  
days

That most she loves to talk of, come  
with me.

My brother James is in the harvest  
field:

But she—you will be welcome—O,  
come in!"

### THE LETTERS.

#### I.

STILL on the tower stood the vane,  
A black yew gloom'd the stagnant air,

I peer'd athwart the chancel pane  
And saw the altar cold and bare.

A clog of lead was round my feet,  
A band of pain across my brow;

"Cold altar, Heaven and earth shall  
meet

Before you hear my marriage vow."

#### II.

I turn'd and humm'd a bitter song  
That mock'd the wholesome human

heart,

And then we met in wrath and wrong,  
We met, but only meant to part.

Full cold my greeting was and dry;  
She faintly smiled, she hardly moved;

I saw with half-unconscious eye  
She wore the colors I approved.

#### III.

She took the little ivory chest,  
With half a sign she turn'd the key,

Then raised her head with lips com-  
prest,

And gave my letters back to me.  
And gave the trinkets and the rings,

My gifts, when gifts of mine could  
please,

As looks a father on the things  
Of his dead son, I look'd on these.

#### IV.

She told me all her friends had said;  
I raged against the public liar;

She talk'd as if her love were dead.  
But in my words were seeds of fire.

"No more of love; your sex is known:  
I never will be twice deceived.

Henceforth I trust the man alone,  
The woman cannot be believed.

#### V.

"Thro' slander, meanest spawn of Hell  
(And women's slander is the worst),

And you, whom once I loved so well,  
Thro' you, my life will be accurst."

I spoke with heart, and heat and force,  
I shook her breast with vague

alarms—  
Like torrents from a mountain source

We rush'd into each other's arms.

#### VI.

We parted: sweetly gleam'd the stars,  
And sweet the vapor-braided blue,

Low breezes fann'd the belfry bars.  
As homeward by the church I drew.

The very graves appear'd to smile,  
So fresh they rose in shadow'd swells;

"Dark porch," I said, "and silent aisle,  
There comes a sound of marriage

bells."

### ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

#### I.

BURY the Great Duke  
With an empire's lamentation,

Let us bury the Great Duke  
To the noise of the mourning of a

mighty nation,  
Mourning when their leaders fall,

Warriors carry the warrior's pall,  
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

#### II.

Where shall we lay the man whom we  
deplore?

Here, in streaming London's central  
roar.

Let the sound of those he wrought for,  
And the feet of those he fought for,  
Echo round his bones for evermore.

## III.

Lead out the pageant : sad and slow,  
As fits an universal woe.  
Let the long long procession go,  
And let the sorrowing crowd about it  
grow.  
And let the mournful martial music  
blow ;  
The last great Englishman is low.

## IV.

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,  
Remembering all his greatness in the  
Past.  
No more in soldier fashion will he  
greet  
With lifted hand the gazer in the  
street.  
O friends, our chief state-oracle is  
mute ;  
Mourn for the man of long enduring  
blood,  
The statesman-warrior, moderate, res-  
olute,  
Whole in himself, a common good.  
Mourn for the man of amplest in-  
fluence,  
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,  
Our greatest yet with least pretence,  
Great in council and great in war,  
Foremost captain of his time,  
Rich in saving common-sense,  
And, as the greatest only are,  
In his simplicity sublime.  
O good gray head which all men knew,  
O voice from which their omens all  
men drew,  
O iron nerve to true occasion true,  
O fallen at length that tower of strength  
Which stood four-square to all the  
winds that blew !  
Such was he whom we deplore.  
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.  
The great World-victor's victor will be  
seen no more.

## V.

All is over and done ;  
Render thanks to the Giver,  
England, for thy son.  
Let the bell be toll'd.  
Render thanks to the Giver,  
And render him to the mould.  
Under the cross of gold  
That shines over city and river,  
There he shall rest for ever  
Among the wise and the bold.  
Let the bell be toll'd ;  
And a reverent people behold  
The towering car, the sable steeds :  
Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,  
Dark in its funeral fold.  
Let the bell be toll'd :  
And a deeper knell in the heart be  
knoll'd ;  
And the sound of the sorrowing an-  
them roll'd

Thro' the dome of the golden cross ;  
And the volleying cannon thunder his  
loss ;

He knew their voices of old.  
For many a time in many a clime  
His captain's-ear has heard them boom  
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom ;  
When he with those deep voices  
wrought,  
Guarding realms and kings from  
shame ;  
With those deep voices our dead cap-  
tain taught

The tyrant, and asserts his claim  
In that dread sound to the great name,  
Which he has worn so pure of blame,  
In praise and in dispraise the same,  
A man of well-temper'd frame.  
O civic muse, to such a name,  
To such a name for ages long,  
To such a name,  
Preserve a broad approach of fame,  
And ever-echoing avenues of song.

## VI.

Who is he that cometh, like an hon-  
or'd guest,  
With banner and with music, with  
soldier and with priest,  
With a nation weeping, and breaking  
on my rest ?  
Mighty Seaman, this is he  
Was great by land as thou by sea.  
Thine island loves thee well, thou fa-  
mous man,  
The greatest sailor since our world be-  
gan.

Now, to the roll of muffled drums,  
To thee the greatest soldier comes ;  
For this is he  
Was great by land as thou by sea ;  
His foes were thine ; he kept us free ;  
O give him welcome, this is he  
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,  
And worthy to be laid by thee ;  
For this is England's greatest son  
He that gain'd a hundred fights.  
Nor ever lost an English gun ;  
This is he that far away  
Against the myriads of Assaye  
Clash'd with his fiery few and won ;  
And underneath another sun,  
Warring on a later day,  
Round affrighted Lisbon drew  
The treble works ; the vast designs  
Of his labor'd rampart-lines,  
Where he greatly stood at bay,  
Whence he issued forth anew,  
And ever great and greater grew,  
Beating from the wasted vines  
Back to France her banded swarms,  
Back to France with countless blows,  
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew  
Beyond the Pyrenean pines.  
Follow'd up in valley and glen  
With blare of bugle, clamor of men,  
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,  
And England pouring on her foes.  
Such a war had such a close.  
Again their ravening eagle rose

In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadow-  
ing wings ;  
And barking for the thrones of kings ;  
Till one that sought but Duty's iron  
crown  
On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler  
down ;  
A day of onsets of despair !  
Dash'd on every rocky square.  
Their surging charges foam'd them-  
selves away ;  
Last, the Prussian trumpet blew :  
Thro' the long-tormented air  
Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,  
And down we swept and charged and  
overthrew.  
So great a soldier taught us there,  
What long-enduring hearts could do  
In that world's-earthquake, Waterloo !  
Mighty Seaman, tender and true,  
And pure as he from taint of craven  
guile,  
O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,  
O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,  
If aught of things that here befall  
Touch a spirit among things divine,  
If love of country move thee there at  
all,  
Be glad, because his bones are laid by  
thine !  
And thro' the centuries let a people's  
voice  
In full acclaim,  
A people's voice,  
The proof and echo of all human fame,  
A people's voice, when they rejoice  
At civic revel and pomp and game,  
Attest their great commander's claim  
With honor, honor, honor, honor to  
him,  
Eternal honor to his name.

## VII.

A people's voice ! we are a people yet.  
Tho' all men else their nobler dreams  
forget,  
Confused by brainless mobs and law-  
less Powers ;  
Thank Him who isled us here, and  
roughly set  
His Briton in blown seas and storming  
showers,  
We have a voice, with which to pay  
the debt  
Of boundless love and reverence and  
regret  
To those great men who fought, and  
kept it ours,  
And keep it ours, O God, from brute  
control ;  
O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye,  
the soul  
Of Europe, keep our noble England  
whole,  
And save the one true seed of freedom  
sown ;  
Betwixt a people and their ancient  
throne,  
That sober freedom out of which there  
springs

Our loyal passion for our tempera-  
ments ;  
For, saving that, ye help to save man-  
kind  
Till public wrong be crumbled into  
dust,  
And drill the raw world for the march  
of mind,  
Till crowds at length be sane and  
crowns be just.  
But wink no more in slothful over-  
trust.  
Remember him who led your hosts ;  
He bade you guard the sacred coasts.  
Your canons moulder on the seaward  
wall ;  
His voice is silent in your council-hall  
For ever ; and whatever tempests  
lower  
For ever silent ; even if they broke  
In thunder, silent ; yet remember all  
He spoke among you, and the Man  
who spoke ;  
Who never sold the truth to serve the  
hour,  
Nor palter'd with Eternal God for  
power ;  
Who let the turbid streams of rumor  
flow  
Thro' either babbling world of high  
and low ;  
Whose life was work, whose language  
rife  
With rugged maxims hewn from life ;  
Who never spoke against a foe ;  
Whose eighty winters freeze with one  
rebuke  
All great self-seekers trampling on  
the right ;  
Truth-teller was our England's Alfred  
named ;  
Truth-lover was our English Duke ;  
Whatever record leap to light  
He never shall be shamed.

## VIII.

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars  
Now to glorious burial slowly borne,  
Follow'd by the brave of other lands,  
He, on whom from both her open  
hands  
Lavish Honor shower'd all her stais,  
And affluent Fortune emptied all her  
horn.  
Yea, let all good things await  
Him who cares not to be great,  
But as he saves or serves the state.  
Not once or twice in our rough island-  
story,  
The path of duty was the way to glory ;  
He that walks it, only thirsting  
For the right, and learns to deaden  
Love of self, before his journey closes,  
He shall find the stubborn thistle burst-  
ing  
Into glossy purples, which outred-  
den  
All voluptuous garden-roses.  
Not once or twice in our fair island-  
story,  
The path of duty was the way to glory ;

He, that ever following her commands,  
On with toil of heart and knees and  
hands.

Thro' the long gorge to the far light  
has won

His path upward, and prevail'd,  
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty  
scaled

Are close upon the shining table-lands  
To which our God Himself is moon  
and sun.

Such was he : his work is done,  
But while the races of mankind en-  
dure,

Let his great example stand  
Colossal, seen of every land,  
And keep the soldier firm, the states-  
man pure ;

Till in all lands and thro' all human  
story

The path of duty be the way to glory ;  
And let the land whose hearths he  
saved from shame

For many and many an age proclaim  
At civic revel and pomp and game  
And when the long-illumined cities  
flame,

Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,  
With honor, honor, honor, honor to  
him,

Eternal honor to his name.

#### ix.

Peace, his triumph will be sung  
By some yet un moulded tongue  
Far on in summers that we shall not  
see :

Peace, it is a day of pain  
For one about whose patriarchal knee  
Late the little children clung

O peace, it is a day of pain  
For one, upon whose hand and heart  
and brain

Once the weight and fate of Europe  
hung.

Ours the pain, be his the gain !  
More than is of man's degree  
Must be with us, watching here  
At this, our great solemnity.

Whom we see not we revere,  
We revere, and we refrain  
From talk of battles loud and vain,  
And brawling memories all too free

For such a wise humility  
As befits a solemn fane :

We revere, and while we hear  
The tides of Music's golden sea  
Setting toward eternity,

Uplifted high in heart and hope are  
we,

Until we doubt not that for one so true  
There must be other nobler work to do  
Than when he fought at Waterloo,  
And Victor he must ever be.

For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill  
And break the shore, and evermore  
Make and break, and work their will ;

Tho' world on world in myriad myriads  
roll

Round us, each with different powers,

And other forms of life than ours,  
What know we greater than the soul ?  
On God and Godlike men we build our  
trust.

Hush, the Dead March wails in the  
people's ears :

The dark crowd moves, and there are  
sobs and tears :

The black earth yawns : the mortal  
disappears ;

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;  
He is gone who seem'd so great. —  
Gone ; but nothing can bereave him  
Of the force he made his own

Being here, and we believe him  
Something far advanced in State,  
And that he wears a truer crown  
Than any wreath that man can weave

him.

Speak no more of his renown,  
Lay your earthly fancies down,  
And in the vast cathedral leave him.

God accept him, Christ receive him.  
1852.

#### THE DAISY.

WRITTEN AT EDINBURGH.

O LOVE, what hours were thine and  
mine

In lands of palm and southern pine  
In lands of palm, of orange blossom,  
Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine.

What Roman strength Turbia show'd  
In ruin, by the mountain road ;

How like a gem, beneath, the city  
Of little Monaco, basking, glow'd.

How richly down the rocky dell  
The torrent vineyard streaming fell

To meet the sun and sunny waters.  
That only heaved with a summerswell.

What slender campanilli grew  
By bays, the peacock's neck in hue ;

Where, here and there, on sandy  
beaches

A milky-bell'd amaryllis blew.

How young Columbus seem'd to rove,  
Yet present in his natal grove,

Now watching high on mountain  
cornice,

And steering, now, from a purple cove,  
Now pacing mute by ocean's rim

Till, in a narrow street and dim,  
I stay'd the wheels at Cogoletto,

And drank, and loyally drank to him.

Nor knew we well what pleased us  
most,

Not the clipt palm of which they  
boast ;

But distant color, happy hamlet,  
A moulder'd citadel on the coast,

Or tower, or high hill-convent, seen  
A light amid its olives green ;

Or olive-hoary cape in ocean ;  
Or rosy blossom in hot ravine,

Where oleanders flush'd the bed  
Of silent torrents, gravel-spread :

And, crossing, oft we saw the glisten  
Of ice, far up on a mountain head.

We loved that hall, tho' white and  
cold,

Those niched shapes of noble mould,

A princely people's awful princes,  
The grave, severe Genovese of old.

At Florence too what golden hours,  
In those long galleries, were ours ;

What drives about the fresh Casinè,  
Or walks in Boboli's ducal bowers.

In bright vignettes, and each complete,  
Of tower or duomo, sunny-sweet,

Or palace, how the city glitter'd,  
Thro' cypress avenues, at our feet.

But when we crost the Lombard plain  
Remember what a plague of rain.

Of rain at Reggio, rain at Parma ;  
At Lodi, rain, Piacenza, rain.

And stern and sad (so rare the smiles  
Of sunlight) look'd the Lombard piles ;

Porch-pillars on the lion resting,  
And sombre, old, colonnaded aisles.

O Milan, O the chanting quires,  
The giant window's blazon'd fires,  
The height, the space, the gloom, the  
glory !

A mount of marble a hundred spires !

I climb'd the roofs at break of day ;  
Sun-smitten Alps before me lay.

I stood among the silent statues,  
And statued pinnacles, mute as they.

How faintly-flush'd, how phantom-fair,  
Was Monte Rosa, hanging there

A thousand shadowy-pencil'd valleys  
And snowy dells in a golden air.

Remember how we came at last  
To Como ; shower and storm and blast

Had blown the lake beyond his limit  
And all was flooded ; and how we past

From Como, when the light was gray,  
And in my head, for half the day,

The rich Virgilian rustic measure  
Of Lari Maxume, all the way,

Like ballad-burden music, kept,  
As on The Lariano crept

To that fair port below the castle  
Of Queen Theodolind, where we slept ;

Or hardly slept, but watch'd awake  
A cypress in the moonlight shake,

The moonlight touching o'er a ter-  
race

One tall Agavè above the lake.

What more ? we took our last adieu,  
And up the snowy Splügen drew,

But ere we reach'd the highest sum-  
mit

I pluck'd a daisy, I gave it you.

It told of England then to me,

And now it tells of Italy.

O love, we two shall go no longer  
To lands of summer across the sea ;

So dear a life your arms enfold  
Whose crying is a cry for gold :

Yet here to-night in this dark city  
When ill and weary, alone and cold,

I found, tho' crush'd to hard and dry,  
This nursing of another sky

Still in the little book you lent me,  
And where you tenderly laid it by :

And I forgot the clouded Forth,  
The gloom that saddens Heaven and  
Earth,

The bitter east, the misty summer  
And gray metropolis of the North.

Perchance, to lull the throbs of pain,  
Perchance, to charm a vacant brain,

Perchance, to dream you still beside  
me,

My fancy fled to the South again.

#### TO THE REV. F. D. MAURICE.

COME, when no graver cares employ,  
God-father, come and see your boy :

Your presence will be sun in winter,  
Making the little one leap for joy ;

For, being of that honest few,  
Who give the Fiend himself his due,  
Should eighty-thousand college coun-  
cils

Thunder " Anathema," friend, at you.

Should all our churchmen foam in  
spite

At you, so careful of the right,  
Yet one lay-hearth would give you  
welcome

(Take it and come) to the Isle of Wight ;

Where, far from noise and smoke of  
town,

I watch the twilight falling brown

All round a careless-order'd garden  
Close to the ridge of a noble down.

You'll have no scandal while you dine,  
But honest talk and wholesome wine,

And only hear the magpie gossip  
Garrulous under a roof of pine :

For groves of pine on either hand,  
To break the blast of winter, stand ;

And further on, the hoary Channel  
Tumbles a breaker on chalk and sand ;

Where, if below the milky steep  
Some ship of battle slowly creep,

And on thro' zones of light and  
shadow

Glimmer away to the lonely deep,

We might discuss the Northern sin  
Which made a selfish war begin ;

Dispute the claims, arrange the  
chances ;

Emperor, Ottoman, which shall win :

Or whether war's avenging rod

Shall lash all Europe into blood ;

Till you should turn to dearer mat-  
ters,

Dear to the man that is dear to God ;

How best to help the slender store,

How mend the dwellings, of the poor ;

How gain in life, as life advances;  
 Valor and charity more and more.  
 Come, Maurice, come: the lawn as yet  
 Is hoar with rime, or spongy-wet;  
 But when the wreath of March has  
 blossom'd,  
 Crocus, anemone, violet,  
 Or later, pay one visit here,  
 For those are few we hold as dear;  
 Nor pay but one, but come for many,  
 Many and many a happy year.  
*January, 1854.*

## WILL.

## I.

O WELL for him whose will is strong!  
 He suffers, but he will not suffer long;  
 He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong:  
 For him nor moves the loud world's  
 random mock,  
 Nor all Calamity's hugest waves con-  
 found,  
 Who seems a promontory rock,  
 That, compass'd round with turbulent  
 sound,  
 In middle ocean meets the surging  
 shock,  
 Tempest-buffeted, citadel-crown'd.

## II.

But ill for him who, bettering not with  
 time,  
 Corrupts the strength of heaven-de-  
 scended Will,  
 And ever weaker grows thro' acted  
 crime,  
 Or seeming-genial venial fault,  
 Recurring and suggesting still!  
 He seems as one whose footsteps halt,  
 Tolling in immeasurable sand.  
 And o'er a weary, sultry land,  
 Far beneath a blazing vault,  
 Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous  
 hill,  
 The city sparkles like a grain of salt.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT  
BRIGADE.

## I.

HALF a league, half a league,  
 Half a league onward,  
 All in the valley of Death  
 Rode the six hundred.  
 "Forward, the Light Brigade!  
 Charge for the guns!" he said:  
 Into the valley of Death  
 Rode the six hundred.

## II.

"Forward, the Light Brigadt!"  
 Was there a man dismay'd  
 No tho' the soldier knew  
 Some one had blunder'd:  
 Theirs not to make reply,  
 Theirs not to reason why,

Theirs but to do and die  
 Into the valley of Death  
 Rode the six hundred.

## III.

Cannon to right of them,  
 Cannon to left of them,  
 Cannon in front of them  
 Volley'd and thunder'd;  
 Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
 Boldly they rode and shot,  
 Into the jaws of Death,  
 Into the mouth of Hell  
 Rode the six hundred.

## IV.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,  
 Flash'd as they turn'd in air  
 Sabring the gunners there,  
 Charging an army, while  
 All the world wonder'd:  
 Plunged in the battery-smoke,  
 Right thro' the line they broke;  
 Cossack and Russian  
 Reel'd from the sabre-stroke  
 Shatter'd and sunder'd.  
 Then they rode back, but not  
 Not the six hundred.

## V.

Cannon to right of them,  
 Cannon to left of them,  
 Cannon behind them  
 Volley'd and thunder'd;  
 Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
 While horse and hero fell,  
 They that had fought so well  
 Came thro' the jaws of Death  
 Back from the mouth of Hell,  
 All that was left of them,  
 Left of six hundred.

## VI.

When can their glory fade?  
 O the wild charge they made!  
 All the world wonder'd.  
 Honor the charge they made!  
 Honor the Light Brigade,  
 Noble six hundred!

## IN MEMORIAM.

STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,  
 Whom we, that have not seen thy  
 face,  
 By faith, and faith alone, embrace,  
 Believing where we cannot prove;  
 Thine are these orbs of light and shade,  
 Thou madest Life in man and brute  
 Thou madest Death; and lo, thy  
 foot  
 Is on the skull which thou hast made  
 Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:  
 Thou madest man, he knows no  
 why;  
 He thinks he was not made to die;  
 And thou hast made him: thou art  
 just.  
 Thou seemest human and divine,  
 The highest, holiest manhood, thou:

Our wills are ours, we know not  
how;  
Our wills are ours, to make them  
thine.

Our little systems have their day;  
They have their day and cease to be:  
They are but broken lights of thee,  
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith: we cannot know:  
For knowledge is of things we see;  
And yet we trust it comes from thee,  
A beam in darkness: let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to  
more,  
But more of reverence in us dwell;  
That mind and soul, according well,  
May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight;  
We mock thee when we do not fear;  
But help thy foolish ones to bear;  
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seem'd my sin in me;  
What seem'd my worth since I be-  
gan;

For merit lives from man to man,  
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,  
Thy creature, whom I found so fair.  
I trust he lives in thee, and there  
I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering  
cries,

Confusions of a wasted youth:  
Forgive them where they fail in  
truth,

And in thy wisdom make me wise.  
1849.

## IN MEMORIAM.

A. H. H.

OBITU MDCCLXXXIII

## I.

I HELD it truth, with him who sings  
To one clear harp in divers tones,  
That men may rise on stepping-  
stones

Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years  
And find in loss a gain to match?  
Or reach a hand thro' time to catch  
The far-off interest of tears?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be  
drown'd,

Let darkness keep her raven gloss:  
Ah, sweeter to be drunk with loss,  
To dance with death, to beat the  
ground,

Than that the victor Hours should  
scorn

The long result of love, and boast,  
'Behold the man that loved and  
lost,

But all he was is overworn."

## II.

OLD Yew, which graspest at the ete-  
rned  
That name the under-lying dead  
Thy fibres net the dreamless head,  
Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.

The seasons bring the flower again,  
And bring the firstling to the flock:  
And in the dusk of thee, the clock  
Beats out the little lives of men.

O not for thee the glow, the bloom,  
Who changest not in any gale,  
Nor branding summer suns avail  
To touch thy thousand years of gloom,

And gazing on thee, sullen tree,  
Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,  
I seem to fall from out my blood  
And grow incorporate into thee.

## III.

O SORROW, cruel fellowship,  
O Priestess in the vaults of Death,  
O sweet and bitter in a breath,  
What whispers from thy lying lip?

"The stars," she whispers, "blindly  
run;

A web is wov'n across the sky;  
From out waste places comes a cry,  
And murmurs from the dying sun:

"And all the phantom, Nature  
stands—

With all the music in her tone,  
A hollow echo of my own,—  
A hollow form with empty hands."

And shall I take a thing so blind,  
Embrace her as my natural good;  
Or crush her, like a vice of blood,  
Upon the threshold of the mind?

## IV.

To Sleep I give my powers away;  
My will is bondsman to the dark;  
I sit within a helmless bark,  
And with my heart I muse and say:

O heart, how fares it with thee now,  
That thou shouldst fail from thy de-  
sire,

Who scarcely darest to inquire,  
"What is it makes me beat so low?"

Something it is which thou hast lost,  
Some pleasure from thine early  
years.

Break, thou deep vase of chilling  
tears,

That grief hath shaken into frost!

Such clouds of nameless trouble cross  
All night below the darken'd eyes:  
With morning wakes the will, and  
cries,

"Thou shalt not be the fool of loss."

## V.

I SOMETIMES hold it half a sin  
To put in words the grief I feel;  
For words, like Nature, half reveal  
And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,  
A use in measured language lies;  
The sad mechanic exercise,  
Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me  
o'er,  
Like coarsest clothes against the  
cold;  
But that large grief which these en-  
fold  
Is given in outline and no more.

## VI.

ONE writes, that "Other friends re-  
main,"  
That "Loss is common to the race,"—  
And common is the commonplace,  
And vacant chaff well meant for grain.

That loss is common would not make  
My own less bitter, rather more :  
Too common ! Never morning wore  
To evening, but some heart did break.

O father, wheresoe'er thou be,  
Who pledgedst now thy gallant son ;  
A shot, ere half thy draught be done,  
Hath still'd the life that beat from  
thee.

O mother, praying God will save  
Thy sailor, — while thy head is  
bow'd,  
His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud,  
Drops in his vast and wandering  
grave.

Ye know no more than I who wrought  
At that last hour to please him well ;  
Who mused on all I had to tell,  
And something written, something  
thought ;

Expecting still his advent home ;  
And ever met him on his way  
With wishes, thinking, here to-day,  
Or here to-morrow will be come.

O somewhere, meek unconscious dove,  
That sittest ranging golden hair ;  
And glad to find thyself so fair,  
Poor child, that waitest for thy love !

For now her father's chimney glows  
In expectation of a guest ;  
And thinking "this will please him  
best,"

She takes a riband or a rose ;  
For he will see them on to-night ;  
And with the thought her color  
burns ;

And, having left the glass, she turns  
Once more to set a ringlet right ;

And, even when she turn'd, the curse  
Had fallen, and her future Lord  
Was drown'd in passing thro' the  
ford,

Or kill'd in falling from his horse.

O what to her shall be the end ?  
And what to me remains of good ?  
To her, perpetual maidenhood,  
And unto me no second friend.

## VII.

DARK house, by which once more I  
stand

Here in the long unlovely street,  
Doors, where my heart was used to  
beat

So quickly, waiting for a hand,  
A hand that can be clasp'd no more,—  
Behold me, for I cannot sleep,  
And like a guilty thing I creep  
At earliest morning to the door.

He is not here ; but far away  
The noise of life begins again,  
And ghastly thro' the drizzling rain  
On the bald street breaks the blank  
day.

## VIII.

A HAPPY lover who has come  
To look on her that loves him well,  
Who 'lights and rings the gateway  
bell,

And learns her gone and far from  
home ;

He saddens, all the magic light  
Dies off at once from bower and hall,  
And all the place is dark, and all  
The chambers emptied of delight :

So find I every pleasant spot  
In which we two were wont to meet,  
The field, the chamber, and the  
street,

For all is dark where thou art not.

Yet as that other, wandering there  
In those deserted walks, may find  
A flower beat with rain and wind,  
Which once she foster'd up with care ;

So seems it in my deep regret.  
O my forsaken heart, with thee  
And this poor flower of poesy  
Which little cared for fades not yet.

But since it pleased a vanish'd eye,  
I go to plant it on his tomb,  
That if it can it there may bloom,  
Or dying, there at least may die.

## IX.

FAIR ship, that from the Italian shore  
Sailedst the placid ocean-plains  
With my lost Arthur's loved remains,  
Spread thy full wings, and waft him  
o'er.

So draw him home to those that mourn  
In vain ; a favorable speed  
Ruffle thy mirror'd mast, and lead  
Thro' prosperous floods his holy urn.

All night no ruder air perplex  
Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor,  
bright

As our pure love, thro' early light  
Shall glimmer on the dewy decks.

Sphere all your lights around, above ;  
Sleep, gentle heavens, before the  
prow ;

Sleep, gentle winds, as he sleeps  
now,

My friend, the brother of my love ;

My Arthur, whom I shall not see  
Till all my widow'd race be run ;  
Dear as the mother to the son,  
More than my brothers are to me.

x

I HEAR the noise about thy keel ;  
I hear the bell struck in the night ;  
I see the cabin-window bright ;  
I see the sailor at the wheel.  
Thou bringest the sailor to thy wife,  
And travell'd men from foreign  
lands ;  
And letters unto trembling hands ;  
And, thy dark freight, a vanish'd life.  
So bring him : we have idle dreams :  
This look of quiet flatters thus  
Our home-bred fancies : O to us,  
The fools of habit, sweeter seems  
To rest beneath the clover sod,  
That takes the sunshine and the  
rains,  
Or where the kneeling hamlet drains  
The chalice of the grapes of God ;  
Than if with thee the roaring wells  
Should gulf him fathom-deep in  
brine ;  
And hands so often clasped in mine,  
Should toss with tangle and with  
shells.

XI.

CALM is the morn without a sound,  
Calm as to suit a calmer grief,  
And only thro' the faded leaf  
The chestnut pattering to the ground :  
Calm and deep peace on this high  
wold,  
And on these dews that drench the  
furze,  
And all the silvery gossamers  
That twinkle into green and gold :  
Calm and still light on yon great plain  
That sweeps with all its autumn  
bowers,  
And crowded farms and lessening  
towers,  
To mingle with the bounding main :  
Calm and deep peace in this wide air,  
These leaves that redden to the fall ;  
And in my heart, if calm at all,  
If any calm, a calm despair :  
Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,  
And waves that sway themselves in  
rest,  
And dead calm in that noble breast  
Which heaves but with the heaving  
deep.

XII.

Lo, as a dove when up she springs  
To bear thro' Heaven a tale of woe,  
Some dolorous message knit below  
The wild pulsation of her wings ;  
Like her I go ; I cannot stay ;  
I leave this mortal ark behind,  
A weight of nerves without a mind,  
And leave the cliffs, and haste away

O'er ocean-mirrors rounded large,  
And reach the glow of southern skies,  
And see the sails at distance rise,  
And linger weeping on the marge,  
And saying : " Comes he thus, my  
friend ?  
Is this the end of all my care ? "  
And circle moaning in the air :  
" Is this the end ? Is this the end ? "  
And forward dart again, and play  
About the prow, and back return  
To where the body sits, and learn,  
That I have been an hour away.

XIII.

TEARS of the widower, when he sees  
A late-lost form that sleep reveals,  
And moves his doubtful arms, and  
feels  
Her place is empty, fall like these ;  
Which weep a loss for ever new,  
A void where heart on heart reposed ;  
And, where warm hands have prest  
and closed,  
Silence, till I be silent too.  
Which weep the comrade of my choice,  
An awful thought, a life removed,  
The human-hearted man I loved,  
A Spirit, not a breathing voice.  
Come Time, and teach me, many years,  
I do not suffer in a dream ;  
For now so strange do these things  
seem,  
Mine eyes have leisure for their tears ;  
My fancies time to rise on wing,  
And glance about the approaching  
sails,  
As tho' they brought but merchant's  
bales,  
And not the burden that they bring.

XIV.

If one should bring me this report,  
That thou hadst touch'd the land to-  
day,  
And I went down unto the quay,  
And found thee lying in the port ;  
And standing, muffled round with woe,  
Should see thy passengers in rank  
Come stepping lightly down the  
plank,  
And beckoning unto those they know ;  
And if along with these should come  
The man I held as half-divine ;  
Should strike a sudden hand in mine,  
And ask a thousand things of home ;  
And I should tell him all my pain,  
And how my life had droop'd of late,  
And he should sorrow o'er my state  
And marvel what possess'd my brain ;  
And I perceived no touch of change,  
No hint of death in all his fame,  
But found him all in all the same,  
I should not feel it to be strange.

XV.

TO-NIGHT the winds begin to rise  
And roar from yonder dropping day.

The last red leaf is whirl'd away,  
The rooks are blown about the skies;  
The forest crack'd, the waters curl'd,  
The cattle huddled on the lea;  
And wildly dash'd on tower and tree  
The sunbeam strikes along the world:  
And but for fancies, which aver  
That all thy motions gently pass  
Althwart a plane of molten glass,  
I scarce could brook the strain and stir

That makes the barren branches loud;  
And but for fear it is not so,  
The wild unrest that lives in woe  
Would dote and pore on yonder cloud  
That rises upward always higher,  
And onward drags a laboring breast,  
And topples round the dreary west,  
A looming bastion fringed with fire.

## XVI.

WHAT words are these have fall'n  
from me?

Can calm despair and wild unrest  
Be tenants of a single breast,  
Or sorrow such a changeling be?  
Or doth she only seem to take  
The touch of change in calm or storm;

But knows no more of transient form  
In her deep self, than some dead lake  
That holds the shadow of a lark  
Hung in the shadow of a heaven?  
Or has the shock, so harshly given,  
Confused me like the unhappy bark  
That strikes by night a craggy shelf,  
And staggers blindly ere she sink?  
And stunn'd me from my power to think

And all my knowledge of myself;

And made me that delirious man  
Whose fancy fuses old and new,  
And flashes into false and true,  
And mingles all without a plan?

## XVII.

THOU comest, much wept for: such a  
breeze  
Compell'd thy canvas, and my  
prayer

Was as the whisper of an air  
To breathe thee over lonely seas.

For I in spirit saw thee move  
Thro' circles of the bounding sky,  
Week after week: the days go by:  
Come quick, thou bringest all I love.  
Henceforth, wherever thou may'st  
roam,

My blessing, like a line of light,  
Is on the waters day and night,  
And like a beacon guards thee home.

So may whatever tempest mars  
Mid ocean, spare thee, sacred bark;  
And balmy drops in summer dark  
Slide from the bosom of the stars.

So kind an office hath been done,  
Such precious relics brought by thee;

The dust of him I shall not see  
Till all my widow'd race be run.

## XVIII

'Tis well; 'tis something; we may  
stand

Where he in English earth is laid,  
And from his ashes may be made  
The violet of his native land.

'Tis little; but it looks in truth  
As if the quiet bones were blest  
Among familiar names to rest  
And in the places of his youth.

Come then, pure hands, and bear the  
head

That sleeps or wears the mask of  
sleep,

And come, whatever loves to weep,  
And hear the ritual of the dead.

Ah yet, ev'n yet, if this might be,  
I, falling on his faithful heart,  
Would breathing thro' his lips im-  
part

The life that almost dies in me;

That dies not, but endures with pain,  
And slowly forms the firmer mind,  
Treasuring the look it cannot find,  
The words that are not heard again.

## XIX.

THE Danube to the Severn gave  
The darken'd heart that beat no  
more;

They laid him by the pleasant shore,  
And in the hearing of the wave.

There twice a day the Severn fills;  
The salt sea-water passes by,  
And hushes half the babbling Wye,  
And makes a silence in the hills.

The Wye is hush'd nor moved along  
And hush'd my deepest grief of all,  
When fill'd with tears that cannot  
fall,

I brim with sorrow drowning song.

The tide flows down, the wave again  
Is vocal in its wooded walls;  
My deeper anguish also falls,  
And I can speak a little then.

## XX.

THE lesser griefs that may be said,  
That breathe a thousand tender  
vows,

And but as servants in a house  
Where lies the master newly dead;

Who speak their feeling as it is,  
And weep the fulness from the mind,  
"It will be hard," they say, "to find  
Another service such as this."

My lighter moods are like to these,  
That out of words a comfort win;  
But there are other griefs within,  
And tears that at their fountain freeze

For by the hearth the children sit  
Cold in that atmosphere of death

And scarce endure to draw the  
breath,  
Or like to noiseless phantoms flit:

But open converse is there none,  
So much the vital spirits sink  
To see the vacant chair, and think,  
"How good! how kind! and he is  
gone."

## XXI.

I SING to him that rests below,  
And, since the grasses round me  
wave,

I take the grasses of the grave,  
And make them pipes whereon to blow.  
The traveller hears me now and then,  
And sometimes harshly will he  
speak;

"This fellow would make weakness  
weak,  
And melt the waxen hearts of men."

Another answers, "Let him be,  
He loves to make parade of pain,  
That with his piping he may gain  
The praise that comes to constancy."

A third is wroth, "Is this an hour  
For private sorrow's barren song,  
When more and more the people  
throng  
The chairs and thrones of civil power?"

"A time to sicken and to swoon,  
When Science reaches forth her arms  
To feel from world to world, and  
charms

Her secret from the latest moon?"

Behold, ye speak an idle thing:  
Ye never knew the sacred dust:  
I do but sing because I must,  
And pipe but as the linnets sing:

And one is glad; her note is gay,  
For now her little ones have ranged;  
And one is sad; her note is changed,  
Because her brood is stol'n away.

## XXII.

THE path by which we twain did go,  
Which led by tracts that pleased us  
well,  
Thro' four sweet years arose and fell,  
From flower to flower, from snow to  
snow:

And we with singing cheer'd the way,  
And, crown'd with all the season lent,  
From April on to April went,  
And glad at heart from May to May:

But where the path we walk'd began  
To slant the fifth autumnal slope,  
As we descended following Hope,  
There sat the Shadow fear'd of man;

Who broke our fair companionship,  
And spread his mantle dark and cold,  
And wrapt thee formless in the fold,  
And dull'd the murmur on thy lip,

And bore thee where I could not see  
Nor follow, tho' I walk in haste,

And think, that somewhere in the  
waste  
The Shadow sits and waits for me.

## XXIII.

Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut,  
Or breaking into song by fits,  
Alone, alone, to where he sits,  
The Shadow cloak'd from head to foot,  
Who keeps the keys of all the creeds,  
I wander, often falling lame,  
And looking back to whence I came,  
Or on to where the pathway leads;

And crying. How changed from where  
it ran  
Thro' lands where not a leaf was  
dumb:

But all the lavish hills would hum  
The murmur of a happy Pan:

When each by turns was guide to each,  
And Fancy light from Fancy caught,  
And Thought leapt out to wed with  
Thought

Ere Thought could wed itself with  
Speech;

And all we met was fair and good,  
And all was good that Time could  
bring,

And all the secret of the Spring  
Moved in the chambers of the blood;

And many an old philosophy  
On Argive heights divinely sang,  
And round us all the thickest rang  
To many a flute of Arcady.

## XXIV.

AND was the day of my delight  
As pure and perfect as I say?  
The very source and fount of Day  
Is dash'd with wandering isles of night.

If all was good and fair we met,  
This earth had been the Paradise  
It never look'd to human eyes  
Since Adam left his garden yet.

And is it that the haze of grief  
Makes former gladness loom so  
great?

To lowness of the present state,  
That sets the past in this relief?

Or that the past will always win  
A glory from its being far;  
And orb into the perfect star  
We saw not, when we moved therein?

## XXV.

I KNOW that this was Life, the track  
Whereon with equal feet we fared;  
And then, as now, the day prepared  
The daily burden for the back.

But this it was that made me move  
As light as carrier-birds in air;  
I loved the weight I had to bear,  
Because it needed help of Love:

Nor could I weary, heart or limb,  
When mighty Love would cleave in  
twain

The lading of a single pain,  
And part it, giving half to him.

## XXVI.

STILL onwards winds the dreary way;  
I with it; for I long to prove  
No lapse of moons can canker Love,  
Whatever fickle tongues may say.

And if that eye which watches guilt  
And goodness, and had power to see  
Within the green the moulder'd tree,  
And towers fall'n as soon as built—

Of, if indeed that eye foresee  
Or see (in Him is no before)  
In more of life true life no more  
And Love the indifference to be,

Then might I find, ere yet the morn  
Breaks hither over Indian seas,  
That Shadow waiting with the keys,  
To shroud me from my proper scorn.

## XXVII.

I ENVY not in any moods  
The captive void of noble rage,  
The linnet born within the cage,  
That never knew the summer woods:

I envy not the beast that takes  
His license in the field of time,  
Unfetter'd by the sense of crime,  
To whom a conscience never wakes;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,  
The heart that never plighted troth,  
But stagnates in the weeds of sloth;  
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall;  
I feel it, when I sorrow most;  
'Tis better to have loved and lost  
Than never to have loved at all.

## XXVIII.

THE time draws near the birth of  
Christ:

The moon is hid; the night is still;  
The Christmas bells from hill to hill  
Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,  
From far and near, on mead and  
moor,

Swell out and fail, as if a door  
Were shut between me and the sound:

Each voice four changes on the wind,  
That now dilate, and now decrease,  
Peace and goodwill, goodwill and  
peace,

Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

This year I slept and woke with pain,  
I almost wish'd no more to wake,  
And that my hold on life would break  
Before I heard those bells again:

But they my troubled spirit rule,  
For they controull'd me when a boy;  
They bring me sorrow touch'd with  
joy,

The merry merry bells of Yule.

## XXIX.

WITH such compelling cause to grieve  
As daily vexes household peace,

And chains regret to his decease,  
How dare we keep our Christmas-eve;  
Which brings no more a welcome guest  
To enrich the threshold of the night  
With shower'd larges of delight,  
In dance and song and game and jest.

Yet go, and while the holly boughs  
Entwine the cold baptismal font,  
Make one wreath more for Use and  
Wont,

That guard the portals of the house;  
Old sisters of a day gone by,  
Gray nurses, loving nothing new;  
Why should they miss their early due  
Before their time? They too will die.

## XXX.

WITH trembling fingers did we weave  
The holly round the Christmas  
hearth;

A rainy cloud possess'd the earth,  
And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall  
We gambol'd, making vain pretence  
Of gladness, with an awful sense  
Of one mute shadow watching all.

We paused, the winds were in the  
beech:

We heard them sweep the winter  
land;

And in a circle hand-in-hand  
Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang;  
We sung, tho' every eye was dim,  
A merry song we sang with him  
Last year: impetuously we sang:

We ceased: a gentler feeling crept  
Upon us: surely rest is meet:  
"They rest," we said, "their sleep is  
sweet,"

And silence follow'd, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range;  
Once more we sang: "They do not  
die

Nor lose their mortal sympathy,  
Nor change to us, although they  
change;

Rapt from the fickle and the frail  
With gather'd power, yet the same,  
Pierces the keen seraphic flame  
From orb to orb, from veil to veil."

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,  
Draw forth the cheerful day from  
night:

O Father, touch the east, and light  
The light that shone when Hope was  
born.

## XXXI.

WHEN Lazaurus left his charnel-cave,  
And home to Mary's house return'd,  
Was this demanded—if he yearn'd  
To hear her weeping by his grave?

"Where wert thou, brother, those four  
days?"

There lives no record of reply.

Which telling what it is to die  
Had surely added praise to praise.  
From every house the neighbors met,  
The streets were fill'd with joyful  
sound,

A solemn gladness even crown'd  
The purple brows of Olivet.  
Behold a man raised up by Christ !  
The rest remaineth unreveal'd ;  
He told it not ; or something seal'd  
The lips of that Evangelist.

## XXXII.

HER eyes are homes of silent prayer,  
Nor other thought her mind admits  
But, he was dead, and there he sits,  
And he that brought him back is there.  
Then one deep love doth supersede  
All other, when her ardent gaze  
Roves from the living brother's face,  
And rests upon the Life indeed.

All subtle thought, all curious fears,  
Borne down by gladness so complete,  
She bows, she bathes the Saviour's  
feet

With costly spikenard and with tears.  
Thrice blest whose lives are faithful  
prayers.

Whose loves in higher love endure ;  
What souls possess themselves so  
pure,  
Or is there blessedness like theirs ?

## XXXIII.

O THOU that after toil and storm  
Mayst seem to have reach'd a purer  
air,

Whose faith has centre everywhere,  
Nor cares to fix itself to form,

Leave thou thy sister when she prays,  
Her early Heaven, her happy views ;  
Nor thou with shadow'd hint con-  
fuse

A life that leads melodious days.

Her faith thro' form is pure as thine,  
Her hands are quicker unto good :

Oh, sacred be the flesh and blood  
To which she links a truth divine !

See thou, that countest reason ripe  
In holding by the law within,  
Thou fail not in a world of sin,  
And ev'n for want of such a type.

## XXXIV.

My own dim life should teach me this,  
That life shall live for evermore,  
Else earth is darkness at the core,  
And dust and ashes all that is ;

This round of green, this orb of flame,  
Fantastic beauty ; such as lures  
In some wild Poet, when he works  
Without a conscience or an aim.

What then were God to such as I ?  
'Twere hardly worth my while to  
choose

Of things all mortal, or to use  
A little patience ere I die ;

'Twere best at once to sink to peace,  
Like birds the charming serpent  
draws,  
To drop head-foremost in the jaws  
Of vacant darkness and to cease.

## XXXV.

YET if some voice that man could  
trust

Should murmur from the narrow  
house,

"The cheeks drop in ; the body  
bows ;

Man dies ; nor is there hope in dust ;"

Might I not say ? " yet even here,  
But for one hour, O Love, I strive

To keep so sweet a thing alive :"  
But I should turn mine ears and hear

The moanings of the homeless sea,  
The sound of streams that swift or  
slow

Draw down Æonian hills, and sow  
The dust of continents to be ;

And Love would answer with a sigh,  
"The sound of that forgetful shore

Will change my sweetness more and  
more,

Half-dead to know that I shall die."

O me, what profits it to put

An idle case ? If Death were seen

At first as Death, Love had not been,  
Or been in narrowest working shut,

Mere fellowship of sluggish moods,  
Or in his coarsest Satyr-shape

Had bruised the herb and crush'd  
the grape,

And bask'd and batten'd in the woods.

## XXXVI.

THO' truths in manhood darkly join,  
Deep-seated in our mystic frame,  
We yield all blessing to the name  
Of Him that made them current coin ;

For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers  
Where truth in closest words shall  
fail,

Where truth embodied in a tale  
Shall enter in at lowly doors.

And so the Word had breath, and  
wrought

With human hands the creed of  
creeds

In loveliness of perfect deeds,  
More strong than all poetic thought ;

Which he may read that binds the  
sheaf,

Or builds the house, or digs the  
grave,

And those wild eyes that watch the  
wave

In roarings round the coral reef.

## XXXVII.

URANIA speaks with darken'd brow :

"Thou pratest here where thou art  
least ;

This faith has many a purer priest,  
And many an abler voice than thou.

Go down beside thy native rill,  
 On thy Parnassus set thy feet,  
 And hear thy laurel whisper sweet  
 About the ledges of the hill."  
 And my Melpomene replies,  
 A touch of shame upon her cheek ;  
 " I am not worthy ev'n to speak  
 Of thy prevailing mysteries ;  
 For I am but an earthly Muse,  
 And owning but a little art  
 To lull with song an aching heart,  
 And render human love his dues ;  
 But brooding on the dear one dead,  
 And all he said of things divine,  
 (And dear to me as sacred wine,  
 To dying lips is all he said),  
 I murmur'd, as I came along,  
 Of comfort clasp'd in truth reveal'd ;  
 And loiter'd in the master's field,  
 And darken'd sanctities with song."

## XXXVIII.

WITH weary steps I loiter on,  
 Tho' always under alter'd skies  
 The purple from the distance dies,  
 My prospect and horizon gone.  
 No joy the blowing season gives,  
 The herald melodies of spring,  
 But in the songs I love to sing  
 A doubtful gleam of solace lives.  
 If any care for what is here  
 Survive in spirits render'd free,  
 Then are these songs I sing of thee  
 Not all ungrateful to thine ear.

## XXXIX.

OLD warder of these buried bones,  
 And answering now my random  
 stroke  
 With fruitful cloud and living  
 smoke,  
 Dark yew, that graspest at the stones  
 And dippest toward the dreamless  
 head,  
 To thee too comes the golden hour  
 When flower is feeling after flower ;  
 But Sorrow fixt upon the dead,  
 And darkening the dark graves of  
 men,  
 What whisper'd from her lying lips ?  
 Thy gloom is kindled at the tips,  
 And passes into gloom again.

## XL.

COULD we forget the widow'd hour  
 And look on Spirits breathed away,  
 As on a maiden in the day  
 When first she wears her orange-  
 flower !  
 When crown'd with blessing she doth  
 rise  
 To take her latest leave of home,  
 And hopes and light regrets that  
 come  
 Make April of her tender eyes ;  
 And doubtful joys the father move.  
 And tears are on the mother's face,

As parting with a long embrace  
 She enters other realms of love ;  
 Her office there to rear, to teach,  
 Becoming as is meet and fit  
 A link among the days, to knit  
 The generations each with each ;  
 And doubtless, unto thee is given  
 A life that bears immortal fruit  
 In such great offices as suit  
 The full-grown energies of heaven.  
 Ay me, the difference I discern !  
 How often shall her old fireside  
 Be cheer'd with tidings of the bride,  
 How often she herself return,  
 And tell them all they would have  
 told,  
 And bring her babe, and make her  
 boast,  
 Till even those that miss'd her most,  
 Shall count new things as dear as old ;  
 But thou and I have shaken hands,  
 Till growing winters lay me low ;  
 My paths are in the fields I know,  
 And thine in undiscover'd lauds.

## XLI.

THY spirit ere our fatal loss  
 Did ever rise from high to higher ;  
 As mounts the heavenward altar  
 fire,  
 As flies the lighter thro' the gross.  
 But thou art turn'd to something  
 strange,  
 And I have lost the links that bound  
 Thy changes, here upon the ground,  
 No more partaker of thy change.  
 Deep folly ! yet that this could be —  
 That I could wing my will with  
 might  
 To leap the grades of life and light,  
 And flash at once, my friend, to thee :  
 For tho' my nature rarely yields  
 To that vague fear implied in death ;  
 Nor shudders at the gulfs beneath,  
 The howlings from forgotten fields ;  
 Yet oft when sundown skirts the moor  
 An inner trouble I behold,  
 A spectral doubt which makes me  
 cold,  
 That I shall be thy mate no more,  
 Tho' following with an upward mind  
 The wonders that have come to thee.  
 Thro' all the secular to-be,  
 But evermore a life behind.

## XLII

I VEX my heart with fancies dim ;  
 He still outstript me in the race ;  
 It was but unity of place  
 That made me dream I rank'd with  
 him.  
 And so may Place retain us still,  
 And he the much-beloved again,  
 A lord of large experience, train  
 To ripper growth the mind and will ;

And what delights can equal those  
That stir the spirit's inner deeps,  
When one that loves but knows not,  
reaps  
A truth from one that loves and  
knows?

## XLIII.

If Sleep and Death be truly one,  
And every spirit's folded bloom  
Thro' all its interval gloom  
In some lone trance should slumber on;  
Unconscious of the sliding hour,  
Bare of the body, might it last,  
And silent traces of the past  
Be all the color of the flower:  
So then were nothing lost to man,  
So that still garden of the souls  
In many a figured leaf enrolls  
The total world since life began;  
And love will last as pure and whole  
As when he loved me here in Time,  
And at the spiritual prime  
Rewaken with the dawning soul.

## XLIV.

How fares it with the happy dead?  
For here the man is more and more;  
But he forgets the days before  
God shut the doorways of his head.  
The days have vanish'd, tone and tint,  
And yet perhaps the hoarding sense  
Gives out at times (he knows not  
whence)  
A little flash, a mystic hint;  
And in the long harmonious years  
(If Death so taste Lethæan springs)  
May some dim touch of earthly things  
Surprise the ranging with thy peers.  
If such a dreamy touch should fall,  
O turn thee round, resolve the doubt;  
My guardian angel will speak out  
In that high place, and tell thee all.

## XLV.

The baby new to earth and sky,  
What time his tender palm is prest  
Against the circle of the breast,  
Has never thought that "this is I:"  
But as he grows he gathers much,  
And learns the muse of "I" and "me,"  
And finds "I am not what I see,  
And other than the things I touch."  
So rounds he to a separate mind  
From whence clear memory may be-  
gin,  
As thro' the frame that binds him in  
His isolation grows defined.  
This use may lie in blood and breath,  
Which else were fruitless of their due,  
Had man to learn himself a new  
Beyond the second birth of Death

## XLVI.

We ranging down this lower track,  
The path we came by, thorn and  
flower,

Is shadow'd by the growing hour,  
Lest life should fail in looking back.  
So be it: there no shade can last  
In that deep dawn behind the tomb,  
But clear from marge to marge shall  
bloom  
The eternal landscape of the past;

A lifelong tract of time reveal'd;  
The fruitful hours of still increase;  
Days order'd in a wealthy peace,  
And those five years its richest field.  
O love, thy province were not large,  
A bounded field, nor stretching far;  
'Look also, Love, a brooding star,  
A rosy warmth from marge to marge.

## XLVII.

THAT each, who seems a separate  
whole,  
Should move his rounds, and fusing  
all  
The skirts of self again, should fall  
Remerging in the general Soul,  
Is faith as vague as all unsweet:  
Eternal form shall still divide  
The eternal soul from all beside;  
And I shall know him when we meet:  
And we shall sit at endless feast,  
Enjoying each the other's good:  
What vaster dream can hit the mood  
Of Love on earth? He seeks at least  
Upon the last and sharpest height,  
Before the spirits fade away,  
Some landing place, to clasp and say  
"Farewell! We lose ourselves in light."

## XLVIII.

If these brief lays, of Sorrow born,  
Were taken to be such as closed  
Grave doubts and answers here pro-  
posed,  
Then these were such as men might  
scorn:  
Her care is not to part and prove;  
She takes, when harsher moods remit,  
What slender shade of doubt may flit,  
And makes it vassal unto love:  
And hence, indeed, she sports with  
words,  
But better serves a wholesome law,  
And holds it sin and shame to draw  
The deepest measure from the chords:  
Nor dare she trust a larger lay,  
But rather loosens from the lip  
Short swallow-flights of song, that  
dip  
Their wings in tears, and skim away.

## XLIX.

FROM art, from nature, from the  
schools,  
Let random influences glance,  
Like light in many a shiver'd lance  
That breaks about the dappled pools.  
The lightest wave of thought shall lisp,  
The fancy's tenderest eddy wreath.

The slightest air of song shall breathe  
To make the sullen surface crisp.

And look thy look, and go thy way,  
But blame not thou the winds that  
make

The seeming-wanton ripple break,  
The tender-pencil'd shadow play.

Beneath all fancied hopes and fears  
Ay me, the sorrow deepens down,  
Whose muffled motions blindly drown  
The bases of my life in tears.

## L.

BE near me when my light is low,  
When the blood creeps, and the  
nerves prick

And tingle; and the heart is sick,  
And all the wheels of Being slow.

Be near me when the sensuous frame  
Is rack'd with pangs that conquer  
trust;

And Time, a maniac scattering dust,  
And Life, a Fury slinging flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,  
And men the flies of latter spring,  
That lay their eggs, and sting and  
sing,

And weave their petty cells and die.

Be near me when I fade away,  
To point the term of human strife,  
And on the low dark verge of life  
The twilight of eternal day.

## LI.

Do we indeed desire the dead  
Should still be near us at our side?  
Is there no baseness we would hide?  
No inner vileness that we dread?

Shall he for whose applause I strove,  
I had such reverence for his blame,  
See with clear eye some hidden shame  
And I be lessen'd in his love?

I wrong the grave with fears untrue:  
Shall love be blamed for want of  
faith?

There must be wisdom with great  
Death:

The dead shall look me thro' and thro'.

Be near us when we climb or fall:  
Ye watch, like God, the rolling hours

With larger other eyes than ours,  
To make allowance for us all.

## LII.

I CANNOT love thee as I ought,  
For love reflects the things beloved;  
My words are only words, and moved  
Upon the topmost froth of thought.

"Yet blame not thou thy plaintive  
song,"

The spirit of true love replied;  
"Thou canst not move me from thy  
side,

Nor human frailty do me wrong.

"What keeps a spirit wholly true  
To that ideal which he bears?

What record? not the sinless years  
That breathes beneath the Syrian blue;

"So fret not, like an idle girl,  
That life is dash'd with flecks of sin.  
Abide: thy wealth is gather'd in.  
When Time hath sunder'd shell from  
pearl."

## LIII.

How many a father have I seen,  
A sober man, among his boys,  
Whose youth was full of foolish noise,  
Who wears his manhood hale and green:

And dare we to this fancy give,  
That had the wild oat not been sown,  
The soil, left barren, scarce had  
grown

The grain by which a man may live?

Oh, if we held the doctrine sound  
For life outliving heats of youth,  
Yet who would preach it as a truth  
To those that eddy round and round?

Hold thou thy good: define it well:  
For fear divine Philosophy  
Should push beyond her mark, and  
be

Procuress to the Lords of Hell.

## LIV.

OH yet we trust that somehow good  
Will be the final goal of ill,  
To pangs of nature, sins of will,  
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;  
That no one life shall be destroy'd,  
Or cast as rubbish to the void.  
When God hath made the pile com-  
plete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;  
That not a moth with vain desire  
Is shrivel'd in a fruitless fire,  
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything;  
I can but trust that good shall fall  
At last—far off—at last, to all,  
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream: but what am I?  
An infant crying in the night:  
An infant crying for the light:  
And with no language but a cry.

## LV.

THE wish, that of the living whole  
No life may fail beyond the grave,  
Derives it not from what we have  
The likeliest God within the soul?

Are God and Nature then at strife,  
That Nature lends such evil dreams?  
So careful of the type she seems,  
So careless of the single life;

That I, considering everywhere  
Her secret meaning in her deeds,  
And finding that of fifty seeds  
She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,  
And falling with my weight of cares

Upon the great world's altar-stairs  
That slope thro' darkness up to God,  
I stretch lame hands of faith, and  
grope,  
And gather dust and chaff, and call  
To what I feel is Lord of all,  
And faintly trust the larger hope.

## LVI.

"So careful of the type?" but no.  
From scarped cliff and quarried  
stone  
She cries "a thousand types are  
gone :

I care for nothing, all shall go.

"Thou makest thine appeal to me :  
I bring to life. I bring to death :  
The spirit does but mean the breath :  
I know no more." And he, shall he,  
Man, her last work, who seem'd so  
fair,

Such splendid purpose in his eyes,  
Who roll'd the psalm to wintry skies,  
Who built him fanes of fruitless  
prayer,

Who trusted God was love indeed  
And love Creation's final law—  
Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw  
With ravine, shriek'd against his  
creed —

Who loved, who suffer'd countless  
ills,

Who battled for the True, the Just,  
Be blown about the desert dust,  
Or seal'd within the iron hills ?

No more? A monster then, a dream,  
A discord. Dragons of the prime,  
That tear each other in their slime,  
Were mellow music match'd with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail !

O for thy voice to soothe and bless !  
What hope of answer, or redress ?  
Behind the veil, behind the veil.

## LVII.

PEACE ; come away : the song of woe  
Is after all an earthly song :

Peace ; come away : we do him  
wrong  
To sing so wildly : let us go.

Come let us go : your cheeks are pale ;  
But half my life I leave behind :  
Methinks my friend is richly shrin-  
ed ;

But I shall pass, my work will fail.

Yet in these ears, till hearing dies,  
One set slow bell will seem to toll  
The passing of the sweetest soul  
That ever look'd with human eyes.

I hear it now, and o'er and o'er,  
Eternal greetings to the dead,  
And "Ave, Ave, Ave," said,  
"Adieu, adieu," for evermore.

## LVIII.

In those sad words I took farewell :  
Like echoes in sepulchral halls,

As drop by drop the water falls  
In vaults and catacombs, they fell ;  
And, falling, idly broke the peace  
Of hearts that beat from day to day  
Half-conscious of their dying clay,  
And those cold crypts where they shall  
cease.

The high Muse answer'd : "Where  
fore grieve

Thy brethren with a fruitless tear ?  
Abide a little longer here,  
And thou shalt take a nobler leave."

## LIX.

O SORROW, wilt thou live with me,  
No casual mistress, but a wife,  
My bosom-friend and half of life ;  
As I confess it needs must be ;

O Sorrow, wilt thou rule my blood,  
Be sometimes lovely like a bride,  
And put thy harsher moods aside,  
If thou wilt have me wise and good.

My centred passion cannot move,  
Nor will it lessen from to-day ;  
But I'll have leave at times to play  
As with the creature of my love ;

And set thee forth, for thou art mine,  
With so much hope for years to  
come,

That, howsoe'er I know thee, some  
Could hardly tell what name were  
thine.

## LX.

HE past : a soul of nobler tone :

My spirit loved and loves him yet,  
Like some poor girl whose heart is  
set

On one whose rank exceeds her own.

He mixing with his proper sphere,  
She finds the baseness of her lot,  
Half jealous of she knows not what,  
And envying all that meet him there

The little village looks forlorn ;  
She sighs amid her narrow days,  
Moving about the household ways,  
In that dark house where she was  
born.

The foolish neighbors come and go,  
And tease her till the day draws by :  
At night she weeps, "How vain am  
I !

How should he love a thing so low ?"

## LXI.

IF, in thy second state sublime,  
Thy ransom'd reason change replies  
With all the circle of the wise,  
The perfect flower of human time ;

And if thou cast thine eyes below,  
How dimly character'd and slight,  
How dwarf'd a growth of cold and  
night,

How blanch'd with darkness must I  
grow !

Yet turn to the doubtful shore,  
Where thy first form was made a  
man ;

I loved thee, Spirit and love, nor  
can  
The soul of Shakespeare love thee  
more.

## LXII.

THO' if an eye that's downward cast  
Could make thee somewhat blench  
or fail,  
Then be my love an idle tale,  
And fading legend of the past ;  
And thou, as one that once declined,  
When he was little more than boy,  
On some unworthy heart with joy,  
But lives to wed an equal mind ;  
And breathes a novel world, the while  
His other passion wholly dies,  
Or in the light of deeper eyes  
Is matter for a dying smile.

## LXIII.

YET pity for a horse o'er-driven,  
And love in which my hound has  
part,  
Can hang no weight upon my heart  
In its assumptions up to heaven ;  
And I am so much more than these,  
As thou, perchance art more than I,  
And yet I spare them sympathy  
And I would set their pains at ease.  
So may'st thou watch me where I  
weep,  
As, unto vaster motions bound,  
The circuits of thine orbit round  
A higher height, a deeper deep.

## LXIV.

DOST thou look back on what hath  
been,  
As some divinely gifted man,  
Whose life in low estate began  
And on a simple village green ;  
Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,  
And grasps the skirts of happy  
chance,  
And breasts the blows of circum-  
stance,  
And grapples with his evil star ;  
Who makes by force his merit known  
And lives to clutch the golden keys,  
To mould a mighty state's decrees,  
And shape the whisper of the throne ;  
And moving up from high to higher,  
Becomes on Fortune's crowning  
slope  
The pillar of a people's hope,  
The centre of a world's desire ;  
Yet feels, as in a pensive dream,  
When all his active powers are still,  
A distant dearness in the hill,  
A secret sweetness in the stream,  
The limit of his narrower fate,  
While yet beside its vocal springs  
He play'd at counsellors and kings,  
With one that was his earliest mate ;  
Who ploughs with pain his native lea  
And reaps the labor of his hands,

Or in the furrow musing stands :  
" Does my old friend remember me ? "

## LXV.

SWEET soul, do with me as thou wilt ;  
I lull a fancy trouble-lost  
With " Love's too precious to be  
lost,  
A little grain shall not be spilt."   
And in that solace can I sing,  
Till out of painful phases wrought  
There flutters up a happy thought,  
Self-balanced on a lightsome wing :  
Since we deserved the name of friends,  
And thine effect so lives in me,  
A part of mine may live in thee  
And move thee on to noble ends.

## LXVI.

YOU thought my heart too far dis-  
eased :  
You wonder when my fancies play  
To find me gay among the gay,  
Like one with any trifle pleased.  
The shade by which my life was crost  
Which makes a desert in the mind,  
Has made me kindly with my kind,  
And like to him whose sight is lost ;  
Whose feet are guided thro' the land,  
Whose jest among his friends is free  
Who takes the children on his knee,  
And winds their curls about his hand :  
He plays with threads, he beats his  
chair  
For pastime, dreaming of the sky ;  
His inner day can never die,  
His night of loss is always there.

## LXVII.

WHEN on my bed the moonlight falls,  
I know that in thy place of rest,  
By that broad water of the west,  
There comes a glory on the walls :  
Thy marble bright in dark appears,  
As slowly steals a silver flame  
Along the letters of thy name,  
And o'er the number of thy years.  
The mystic glory swims away ;  
From off my bed the moonlight dies ;  
And closing eaves of wearied eyes  
I sleep till dusk is dipt in gray :  
And then I know the mist is drawn  
A lucid veil from coast to coast,  
And in the dark church like a ghost  
Thy tablet glimmers to the dawn.

## LXVIII.

WHEN in the down I sink my head,  
Sleep, Death's twin-brother, times  
my breath ;  
Sleep, Death's twin-brother, knows  
not Death,  
Nor can I dream of thee as dead :  
I walk as ere I walk'd forlorn,  
When all our path was fresh with  
dew.

And all the bugle breezes blew  
Reveillee to the breaking morn.

But what is this ? I turn about,  
I find a trouble in thine eye,  
Which makes me sad I know not  
why,  
Nor can my dream resolve the doubt :  
But ere the lark hath left the lea  
I wake, and I discern the truth ;  
It is the trouble of my youth  
That foolish sleep transfers to thee.

## LXIX.

I DREAM'D there would be Spring no  
more,  
That Nature's ancient power was  
lost :  
The streets were black with smoke  
and frost,  
They chatter'd trifles at the door  
I wander'd from the noisy town,  
I found a wood with thorny boughs :  
I took the thorns to bind my brows,  
I wore them like a civic crown ;  
I met with scoffs, I met with scorns  
From youth and babe and hoary  
hairs :  
They call'd me in the public squares  
The fool that wears a crown of thorns :  
They call'd me fool, they call'd me  
child :  
I found an angel of the night ;  
The voice was low, the look was  
bright ;  
He look'd upon my crown and smiled :  
He reach'd the glory of a hand,  
That seem'd to touch it into leaf :  
The voice was not the voice of grief,  
The words were hard to understand.

## LXX.

I CANNOT see the features right,  
When on the gloom I strive to paint  
The face I know ; the hues are faint  
And mix with hollow masks of night ;  
Cloud-towers by ghostly masons  
wrought,  
A gulf that ever shuts and gapes,  
A hand that points, and palled shapes  
In shadowy thoroughfares of thought ;  
And crowds that stream from yawning-  
doors,  
And shoals of pucker'd faces drive ;  
Dark bulks that tumble half alive,  
And lazy lengths on boundless shores ;  
Till all at once beyond the will  
I hear a wizard music roll,  
And thro' a lattice on the soul  
Looks thy fair face and makes it still.

## LXXI.

SLEEP, kinsman thou to death and  
trance  
And madness, thou hast forged at  
last  
A night-long Present of the Past

In which we went thro' summer  
France.

Hadst thou such credit with the soul ?  
Then bring an opiate trebly strong,  
Drug down the blindfold sense of  
wrong  
That so my pleasure may be whole ;  
While now we talk as once we talk'd  
Of men and minds, the dust of  
change,  
The days that grow to something  
strange,  
In walking as of old we walk'd  
Beside the river's wooded reach,  
The fortress, and the mountain ridge,  
The cataract flashing from the bridge,  
The breaker breaking on the beach.

## LXII.

RISEST thou thus, dim dawn, again,  
And howlest, issuing out of night,  
With blasts that blow the poplar  
white,  
And lash with storm the streaming  
pane ?  
Day when my crown'd estate begun  
To pine in that reverse of doom,  
Which sicken'd every living bloom,  
And blurr'd the splendor of the sun ;  
Who usherest in the dolorous hour  
With thy quick tears that make the  
rose  
Pull sideways, and the daisy close  
Her crimson fringes to the shower ;  
Who might'st have heaved a windless  
flame  
Up the deep East, or, whispering,  
play'd  
A chequer-work of beam and shade  
Along the hills, yet look'd the same,  
As wan, as chill, as wild as now ;  
Day mark'd as with some hideous  
crime,  
When the dark hand struck down  
thro' time,  
And cancell'd nature's best : but thou,  
Lift as thou may'st thy burthen'd  
brows  
Thro' clouds that drench the morning  
star,  
And whirl the ungarner'd sheaf afar,  
And sow the sky with flying boughs,  
And up thy vault with roaring sound  
Climb thy thick noon, disastrous day ;  
Touch thy dull goal of joyless pray,  
And hide thy shame beneath the  
ground.

## LXXIII.

So many worlds, so much to do,  
So little done, such things to be,  
How know I what had need of thee,  
For thou wert strong as thou wert  
true ?  
The fame is quench'd that I foresaw,  
The head hath miss'd an earthly  
wreath ;

I curse not nature, no, nor death ;  
For nothing is that errs from law.

We pass : the path that each man trod  
Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds :  
What fame is left for human deeds  
In endless age ? It rests with God.

O hollow waith of dying fame,  
Fade wholly, while the soul exults,  
And self-infolds the large results  
Of force that would have forged a name.

## LXXIV.

As sometimes in a dead man's face,  
To those that watch it more and more,  
A likeness, hardly seen before,  
Comes out—to some one of his race :

So dearest, now thy brows are cold,  
I see thee what thou art, and know  
Thy likeness to the wise below,  
Thy kindred with the great of old.

But there is more than I can see,  
And what I see I leave unsaid,  
Nor speak it, knowing Death has  
made

His darkness beautiful with thee.

## LXXV.

I LEAVE thy praises unexpress'd  
In verse that brings myself relief,  
And by the measure of my grief  
I leave thy greatness to be guess'd ;

What practice howsoe'er expert  
In fitting aptest words to things,  
Or voice the richest-toned that sings,  
Hath power to give thee as thou wert ?

I care not in these fading days  
To raise a cry that lasts not long,  
And round thee with the breeze of  
song

To stir a little dust of praise.

Thy leaf has perish'd in the green,  
And, while we breathe beneath the  
sun,

The world which credits what is done  
Is cold to all that might have been.

So here shall silence guard thy fame ;  
But somewhere, out of human view,  
Whate'er thy hands are set to do  
Is wrought with tumult of acclaim.

## LXXVI.

TAKE wings of fancy, and ascend,  
And in a moment set thy face  
Where all the starry heavens of  
space

Are sharpen'd to a needle's end ;

Take wings of foresight ; lighten thro'  
The secular abyss to come,

And lo, thy deepest lays are dumb  
Before the mouldering of a yew ;

And if the matin songs, that woke  
The darkness of our planet, last,  
Thine own shall wither in the vast,  
Fre half the lifetime of an oak.

Ere these have clothed their branchy  
bowers

With fifty Mays, thy songs are vain ;  
And what are they when these  
remain

The ruin'd shells of hollow towers ?

## LXXVII.

WHAT hope is here for modern rhyme  
To him, who turns a musing eye  
On songs, and deeds, and lives, that  
lie

Foreshorten'd in the tract of time ?

These mortal lullabies of pain

May bind a book, may line a box,  
May serve to curl a maiden's locks ;  
Or when a thousand moons shall wane

A man upon a stall may find,  
And passing, turn the page that tells  
A grief, then changed to something  
else,

Sung by a long-forgotten mind.

But what of that ? My darken'd ways  
Shall ring with music all the same :  
To breathe my loss is more than  
fame,

To utter love more sweet than praise.

## LXXVIII.

AGAIN at Christmas did we weave  
The holly round the Christmas  
hearth ;

The silent snow possess'd the earth,  
And calmly fell our Christmas-eve :

The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,  
No wing of wind the region swept,  
But over all things brooding slept  
The quiet sense of something lost.

As in the winters left behind,  
Again our ancient games had place,  
The mimic picture's breathing grace,  
And dance and song and hoodman-  
blind.

Who show'd a token of distress ?

No single tear, no mark of pain :

O sorrow, then can sorrow wane ?

O grief, can grief be changed to less ?

O last regret, regret can die !

No—mixt with all this mystic frame,

Her deep relations are the same,

But with long use her tears are dry.

## LXXIX.

"MORE than my brothers are to me"—

Let this not vex thee, noble heart !

I know thee of what force thou art

To hold the costliest love in fee.

But thou and I are one in kind,

As moulded like in nature's mint,

And hill and wood and field did print  
The same sweet forms in either mind.

For us the same cold streamlet curl'd

Thro' all his eddying coves ; the  
same

All winds that roam the twilight  
came

In whispers of the beauteous world.

At one dear knee we proffer'd vows,  
One lesson from one book we learn'd,  
Ere childhood's flaxen ringlet turn'd  
To black and brown on kindred brows.

And so my wealth resembles thine,  
But he was rich where I was poor,  
And he supplied my want the more  
As his unlikeness fitted mine.

## LXXX.

If any vague desire should rise,  
That holy Death ere Arthur died  
Had moved me kindly from his side,  
And dropt the dust on tearless eyes ;

Then fancy shapes, as fancy can,  
The grief my loss in him had  
wrought,

A grief as deep as life or thought,  
But stay'd in peace with God and man.

I make a picture in the brain ;  
I hear the sentence that he speaks ;  
He bears the burden of the weeks ;  
But turns his burden into gain.

His credit thus shall set me free ;  
And, influence-rich to soothe and  
save,

Unused example from the grave  
Reach out dead hands to comfort me.

## LXXXI.

COULD I have said while he was here  
" My love shall now no further range ;  
There cannot come a mellow  
change,

For now is love mature in ear."

Love, then, had hope of richer store :

What end is here to my complaint ?

This haunting whisper makes me  
faint,

" More years had made me love thee  
more."

But Death returns an answer sweet :

" My sudden frost was sudden gain,

And gave all ripeness to the grain,

It might have drawn from after-heat."

## LXXXII.

I WAGE not any feud with Death  
For changes wrought on form and  
face ;

No lower life that earth's embrace

May breed with him, can fright my  
faith.

Eternal process moving on,

From state to state the spirit walks ;

And these are but the shatter'd  
stalks,

Or ruin'd chrysalis of one.

Nor blame I Death, because he bare

The use of virtue out of earth :

I know transplanted human worth

Will bloom to profit, elsewhere.

For this alone on Death I wreak

The wrath that garners in my heart ;

He put our lives so far apart

We cannot hear each other speak.

## LXXXIII.

DIP down upon the northern shore,

O sweet new-year delaying long ;

Thou doest expectant nature wrong ;  
Delaying long, delay no more.

What stays thee from the clouded  
moons,

Thy sweetness from its proper place ?  
Can trouble live with April days,  
Or sadness in the summer moons ?

Bring orchis, bring the foxglove spire,

The little speedwell's darling blue,

Deep tulips dash'd with fiery dew,

Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.

O thou, new-year, delaying long,

Delayest the sorrow in my blood,

That longs to burst a frozen bud,

And flood a fresher throat with song.

## LXXXIV.

WHEN I contemplate all alone

The life that had been thine below,

And fix my thoughts on all the glow  
To which thy crescent would have  
grown ;

I see thee sitting crown'd with good,

A central warmth diffusing bliss

In glance and smile, and clasp and  
kiss,

On all the branches of thy blood ;

Thy blood, my friend, and partly mine ;

For now the day was drawing on,

When thou should'st link thy life  
with one

Of mine own house, and boys of thine

Had babbled " Uncle " on my knee ;

But that remorseless iron hour

Made cypress of her orange flower,

Despair of Hope, and earth of thee.

I seem to meet their least desire,

To clap their cheeks, to call them  
mine.

I see their unborn faces shine  
Beside the never-lighted fire.

I see myself an honour'd guest,

Thy partner in the flowery walk

Of letters, genial table-talk,

Or deep dispute, and graceful jest ;

While now thy prosperous labor fills

The lips of men with honest praise,

And sun by sun the happy days

Descend below the golden hills

With promise of a morn as fair ;

And all the train of bounteous hours

Conduct by paths of glowing powers

To reverence and the silver hair ;

Till slowly worn her earthly robe,

Her lavish mission richly wrought,

Leaving great legacies of thought,

Thy spirit should fail from off the  
globe ;

What time mine own might also flee,

As link'd with thine in love and fate.

And, hovering o'er the dolorous  
strait

To the other shore, involved in thee,

Arrive at last the blessed goal,  
And He that died in Holy Land  
Would reach us out the shining hand,  
And take us as a single soul.

What reed was that on which I leant?  
A backward fancy, wherefore wake  
The old bitterness again, and break  
The low beginnings of content.

LXXXV.

This truth came borne with bier and  
pail,

I felt it, when I sorrow'd most,  
'Tis better to have loved and lost,  
That never to have loved at all—

O true in word, and tried in deed,  
Demanding, so to bring relief  
To this which is our common grief,  
What kind of life is that I lead;

And whether trust in things above  
Be dimm'd of sorrow, or sustain'd;  
And whether love for him have  
drain'd

My capabilities of love;

Your words have virtue such as draws  
A faithful answer from the breast,  
Thro' light reproaches, half exprest,  
And loyal unto kindly laws.

My blood an even tenor kept,  
Till on mine ear this message falls,  
That in Vienna's fatal walls  
God's finger touch'd him, and he slept.

The great Intelligences fair  
That range above our mortal state,  
In circle round the blessed gate,  
Received and gave him welcome there;

And led him thro' the blissful climes,  
And show'd him in the fountain  
fresh

All knowledge that the sons of flesh  
Shall gather in the cycled times.

But I remain'd whose hopes were dim,  
Whose life, whose thoughts were  
little worth,

To wander on a darken'd earth,  
Where all things round me breathed  
of him.

O friendship, equal-poised control,  
O heart, with kindest motion warm,  
O sacred essence, other form,

O solemn ghost, O crowned soul!

Yet none could better know than I,  
How much of act at human hands  
The sense of human will demands  
By which we dare to live or die.

Whatever way my days decline,  
I felt and feel, tho' left alone,  
His being working in mine own,  
The footsteps of his life in mine;

A life that all the Muses deck'd  
With gifts of grace, that might ex-  
press

All comprehensive tenderness,  
All-subtilizing intellect:

And so my passion hath not swerved  
To works of weakness, but I find

An image comforting the mind,  
And in my grief a strength reserved.

Likewise the imaginative woe,  
That loved to handle spiritual strife,  
Diffused the shock thro' all my life,  
But in the present broke the blow.

My pulses therefore beat again  
For other friends that once I met;  
Nor can it suit me to forget  
The mighty hopes that make us men.

I woo your love: I count it crime  
To mourn for any overmuch;  
I, the divided half of such  
A friendship as had master'd Time;

Which masters Time indeed, and is  
Eternal, separate from fears:  
The all-assuming months and years  
Can take no part away from this:

But Summer on the steaming floods,  
And Spring that swells the narrow  
brooks,

And Autumn, with a noise of rooks,  
That gather in the waning woods,

And every pulse of wind and wave  
Recalls, in change of light or gloom,  
My old affection of the tomb,

And my prime passion in the grave:

My old affection of the tomb,  
A part of stillness, yearns to speak:  
"Arise, and get thee forth and seek  
A friendship for the years to come.

I watch thee from the quiet shore:  
Thy spirit up to mine can reach;  
But in dear words of human speech  
We two communicate no more."

And I, "Can clouds of nature stain  
The starry clearness of the free?  
How is it? Canst thou feel for me  
Some painless sympathy with pain?"

And lightly does the whisper fall;  
'Tis hard for thee to fathom this;  
I triumph in conclusive bliss,  
And that serene result of all."

So hold I commerce with the dead;  
Or so methinks the dead would say;  
Or so shall grief with symbols play,  
And pining life be fancy-fed.

Now looking to some settled end,  
That these things pass, and I shall  
prove

A meeting somewhere, love with  
love,

I crave your pardon, O my friend;

If not so fresh, with love as true,  
I, clasping brother-hands, aver  
I could not, if I would, transfer  
The whole I felt for him to you.

For which be they that hold apart  
The promise of the golden hours?  
First love, first friendship, equal  
powers,

That marry with the virgin heart.

Still mine, that cannot but deplore,  
That beats within a lonely place,

That yet remembers his embrace,  
But at his footstep leaps no more,  
My heart, tho' widow'd, may not rest  
Quite in the love of what is gone,  
But seeks to beat in time with one  
That warms another living breast.  
Ah, take the imperfect gift I bring,  
Knowing the primrose yet is dear,  
The primrose of the later year,  
As not unlike to that of Spring.

## LXXXVI.

SWEET after showers, ambrosial air,  
That rollest from the gorgeous  
gloom  
Of evening over brake and bloom  
And meadow, slowly breathing bare  
The round of space, and rapt below  
Thro' all the dewy-tassell'd wood,  
And shadowing down the horned  
flood  
In ripples, fan my brows and blow  
The fever from my cheek, and sigh  
The full new life that feeds thy  
breath  
Throughout my frame, till Doubt  
and Death,  
Ill brethren, let the fancy fly  
From belt to belt of crimson seas  
On leagues of odor streaming far,  
To where in yonder orient star  
A hundred spirits whisper "Peace."

## LXXXVII.

I PAST beside the reverend walls  
In which of old I wore the gown;  
I roved at random thro' the town,  
And saw the tumult of the halls;  
And heard once more in college fanes  
The storm their high-built organs  
make,  
And thunder-music, rolling, shake  
The prophets blazon'd on the panes;  
And caught once more the distant  
shout,  
The measured pulse of racing oars  
Among the willows; paced the shores  
And many a bridge, and all about  
The same gray flats again, and felt  
The same, but not the same; and  
last  
Up that long walk of limes I past  
To see the rooms in which he dwelt.  
Another name was on the door:  
I linger'd; all within was noise  
Of song, and clapping hands, and  
boys  
That crash'd the glass and beat the  
floor;  
Where once we held debate, a band  
Of youthful friends, on mind and  
art;  
And labor, and the changing mart,  
And all the framework of the land;  
When one would aim an arrow fair,  
But send it slackly from the string;

And one would pierce an outer ring,  
And one an inner, here and there;

And last the master-bowman, he,  
Would cleave the mark. A willing  
ear  
We lent him. Who, but hung to  
hear  
The rapt oration flowing free  
From point to point, with power and  
grace  
And music in the bounds of law,  
To those conclusions when we saw  
The God within him light his face.  
And seem to lift the form, and glow  
In azure orbits heavenly-wise;  
And over those ethereal eyes  
The bar of Michael Angelo.

## LXXXVIII.

WILD bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,  
Rings Eden thro' the budded quicks,  
O tell me where the senses mix,  
O tell me where the passions meet,  
Whence radiate: fierce extremes em-  
ploy  
Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,  
And in the midmost heart of grief  
Thy passion clasps a secret joy:  
And I — my harp would prelude woe,  
I cannot all command the strings;  
The glory of the sun of things  
Will flash along the chords and go

## LXXXIX.

WITCH-ELMS that counterchange the  
floor  
Of this flat lawn with dusk and  
bright:  
And thou, with all thy breadth and  
height  
Of foliage, towering sycamore;  
How often, hither wandering down,  
My Arthur found your shadows fair,  
And shook to all the liberal air  
The dust and din and steam of town:  
He brought an eye for all he saw;  
He mixt in all our simple sports;  
They pleased him, fresh from brawl-  
ing courts  
And dusty purlieus of the law.  
O joy to him in this retreat,  
Immantled in ambrosial dark,  
To drink the cooler air, and mark  
The landscape winking thro' the heat:  
O sound to rout the brood of cares,  
The sweep of scythe in morning dew,  
The gust that round the garden flew,  
And tumbled half the mellowing  
pears!  
O bliss, when all in circle drawn  
About him, heart and ear were fed  
To hear him, as he lay and read  
The Tuscan poets on the lawn:  
Or in the all-golden afternoon  
A guest, or happy sister, sung,

Or here she brought the harp and flung  
 A ballad to the brightening moon:  
 Nor less it pleased in livelier moods,  
 Beyond the bounding hill to stray,  
 And break the livelong summer day  
 With banquet in the distant woods;  
 Whereat we glanced from theme to theme,  
 Discuss'd the books to love or hate,  
 Or touch'd the changes of the state,  
 Or threaded some Socratic dream;  
 But if I praised the busy town,  
 He loved to rail against it still,  
 For "ground in yonder social mill  
 We rub each other's angles down,  
 "And merge" he said, "in form and gloss  
 The picturesque of man and man."  
 We talk'd: the stream beneath us ran,  
 The wine-flask lying couch'd in moss,  
 Or cool'd within the glooming wave;  
 And last, returning from afar,  
 Before the crimson-circled star  
 Had fall'n into her father's grave,  
 And brushing ankle-deep in flowers,  
 We heard behind the woodbine veil  
 The milk that bubbled in the pail,  
 And buzzings of the honied hours.

## XC.

HE tasted love with half his mind,  
 Nor ever drank the inviolate spring  
 Where nighest heaven, who first  
 could fling  
 This bitter seed among mankind;  
 That could the dead, whose dying eyes  
 Were closed with wail, resume their life,  
 They would but find in child and wife  
 An iron welcome when they rise:  
 'Twas well, indeed, when warm with wine,  
 To pledge them with a kindly tear,  
 To talk them o'er, to wish them here,  
 To count their memories half divine;  
 But if they came who past away,  
 Behold their brides in other hands;  
 The hard heir strides about their lands,  
 And will not yield them for a day.  
 Yea, tho' their sons were none of these,  
 Not less the yet-loved sire would make  
 Confusion worse than death, and shake  
 The pillars of domestic peace.  
 Ah dear but come thou back to me:  
 Whatever change the years have wrought,  
 I find not yet one lonely thought  
 That cries against my wish for thee.

## XCI.

WHEN rosy plumelets tuft the larch,  
 And rarely pipes the mounted thrush;  
 Or underneath the barren bush  
 Flits by the sea blue bird of March;  
 Come, wear the form by which I know  
 Thy spirit in time among thy peers,  
 The hope of unaccomplish'd years  
 Be large and lucid round thy brow.  
 When summer's hourly-mellowing  
 change  
 May breathe, with many rosesweet,  
 Upon the thousand waves of wheat,  
 That ripple round the lonely grange;  
 Come: not in watches of the night,  
 But when the sunbeam broodeth warm,  
 Come, beauteous in thine after form,  
 And like a finer light in light.

## XCII.

IF any vision should reveal  
 Thy likeness, I might count it vain  
 As but the canker of the brain:  
 Yea, tho' it spake and made appeal  
 To chances where our lots were cast  
 Together in the days behind,  
 I might but say, I hear a wind  
 Of memory murmuring the past.  
 Yea, tho' it spake and bared to view  
 A fact within the coming year;  
 And tho' the months, revolving near,  
 Should prove the phantom-warning true,  
 They might not seem thy prophecies,  
 But spiritual presentiments,  
 And such refraction of events  
 As often rises ere they rise.

## XCIII.

I SHALL not see thee. Dare I say  
 No spirit ever brake the band  
 That stays him from the native land,  
 Where first he walk'd when clasp'd in clay?  
 No visual shade of some one lost,  
 But he, the Spirit himself, may come  
 Where all the nerve of sense is numb;  
 Spirit to Spirit, Ghost to Ghost.  
 O, therefore, from thy sightless range  
 With gods in unconjectured bliss,  
 O, from the distance of the abyss  
 Of tenfold-complicated change,  
 Descend, and touch, and enter; hear  
 The wish too strong for words to name;  
 That in this blindness of the frame  
 My Ghost may feel that thine is near.

## XCIV.

How pure at heart and sound in head  
 With what divine affections bold

Should be the man whose thought  
would hold  
An hour's communion with the dead.  
In vain: shalt thou, or any, call  
The spirits from their golden day,  
Except, like them, thou too canst  
say,  
My spirit is at peace with all.  
They haunt the silence of the breast,  
Imaginations calm and fair,  
The memory like a cloudless air,  
The conscience as a sea at rest:  
But when the heart is full of din,  
And doubt beside the portal waits,  
They can but listen at the gates,  
And hear the household jar within.

## XCV.

By night we linger'd on the lawn,  
For underfoot the herb was dry;  
And genial warmth; and o'er the  
sky  
The silvery haze of summer drawn;  
And calm that let the tapers burn  
Unwavering: not a cricket chirr'd:  
The brook alone far-off was heard,  
And on the board the fluttering urn:  
And bats went round in fragrant skies,  
And wheel'd or lit the filmy shapes  
That haunt the dusk, with ermine  
capas  
And woolly breasts and beaded eyes;  
While now we sang old songs that  
peal'd  
From knoll to knoll, where, couch'd  
at ease,  
The white kine glimmer'd, and the  
trees  
Laid their dark arms about the field.  
But when those others, one by one,  
Withdrew themselves from me and  
night,  
And in the house light after light  
Went out, and I was all alone,  
A hunger seized my heart; I read  
Of that glad year which once had  
been,  
In those fall'n leaves which kept  
their green,  
The noble letters of the dead:  
And strangely on the silence broke  
The silent-speaking words, and  
strange  
Was love's dumb cry defying change  
To test his worth; and strangely spoke  
The faith, the vigor, bold to dwell  
On doubts that drive the coward  
back,  
And keen thro' wordy snares to track  
Suggestion to her inmost cell.  
So word by word, and line by line,  
The dead man touch'd me from the  
past,  
And all at once it seem'd at last  
His living soul was flash'd on mine,

And mine in his was wound, and  
whirl'd  
About empyreal heights of thought,  
And came on that which is, and  
caught  
The deep pulsations of the world,  
Æonian music measuring out  
The steps of Time—the shocks of  
Chance—  
The blows of Death. At length my  
trance  
Was cancell'd, stricken thro' with  
doubt.  
Vague words! but ah, how hard to  
frame  
In matter-moulded forms of speech,  
Or ev'n for intellect to reach  
Thro' memory that which I became:  
Till now the doubtful dusk reveal'd  
The knolls once more where, couch'd  
at ease,  
The white kine glimmer'd, and the  
trees  
Laid their dark arms about the field:  
And suck'd from out the distant gloom  
A breeze began to tremble o'er  
The large leaves of the sycamore,  
And fluctuate all the still perfume,  
And gathering fresher overhead,  
Rock'd the full-foliaged elms, and  
swung  
The heavy-folded rose, and flung  
The lilies to and fro, and said

"The dawn, the dawn," and died  
away;  
And East and West, without a  
breath,  
Mixt their dim lights, like life and  
death,  
To broaden into boundless day.

## XCVI.

You say, but with no touch of scorn,  
Sweet-hearted, you, whose light blue  
eyes  
Are tender over drowning flies,  
You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.  
I know not: one indeed I knew  
In many a subtle question versed,  
Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,  
But ever strove to make it true:  
Perplex'd in faith, but pure in deeds,  
At last he beat his music out.  
There lives more faith in honest  
doubt,  
Believe me, than in half the creeds.  
He fought his doubts and gather'd  
strength,  
He would not make his judgment  
blind,  
He faced the spectres of the mind  
And laid them: thus he came at  
length  
To find a stronger faith his own;  
And power was with him in the  
night,

Which makes the darkness and the  
light,  
And dwells not in the light alone,  
But in the darkness and the cloud,  
As over Sinai's peaks of old,  
While Israel made their gods of gold,  
Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

## XCVII.

My love has talk'd with rocks and  
trees ;

He finds on misty mountain-ground  
His own vast shadow glory-crown'd ;  
He sees himself in all he sees.

Two partners of a married life —  
I look'd on these and thought of  
thee

In vastness and in mystery,  
And of my spirit as of a wife.

These two—they dwelt with eye on  
eye,

Their hearts of old have beat in  
tune,

Their meetings made December  
June,

Their every parting was to die.

Their love has never past away ;

The days she never can forget

Are earnest that he loves her yet,

Whate'er the faithless people say.

Her life is lone, he sits apart,

He loves her yet, she will not weep,

Tho' rapt in matters dark and deep

He seems to slight her simple heart.

He thrids the labyrinth of the mind,

He reads the secret of the star,

He seems so near and yet so far,

He looks so cold: she thinks him kind.

She keeps the gift of years before,

A wither'd violet is her bliss :

She knows not what his greatness is:

For that, for all, she loves him more.

For him she plays, to him she sings ;

Of early faith and plighted vows ;

She knows but matters of the house,

And he, he knows a thousand things.

Her faith is fixt and cannot move,

She darkly feels him great and wise,

She dwells on him with faithful

eyes,

"I cannot understand ; I love."

## XCVIII.

You leave us : you will see the Rhine,  
And those fair hills I sail'd below,

When I was there with him ; and go

By summer belts of wheat and vine

To where he breathed his latest breath

That City. All her splendor seems

No livelier than the wisp that gleams

On Lethe in the eyes of Death.

Let her great Danube rolling fair

Enwind her isles, unmark'd of me:

I have not seen, I will not see

Vienna ; rather dream that there,

A treble darkness, Evil haunts

The birth, the bridal ; friend from  
friend

Is oftener parted, fathers bend

Above more graves, a thousand wants

Gnarr at the heels of men, and prey

By each cold hearth, and sadness

flings

Her shadow on the blaze of kings ;

And yet myself have heard him say,

That not in any mother town

With statelier progress to and fro

The double tides of chariots flow

By park and suburb under brown

Of luster leaves : no more content,

He told me, lives in any crowd,

When all is gay with lamps, and loud

With sport and song, in booth and  
tent,

Imperial halls, or open plain ;

And wheels the circled dance, and  
breaks

The rocket molten into flakes

Of crimson or in emerald rain.

## XCIX.

RISEST thou thus, dim dawn, again,

So loud with voices of the birds,

So thick with lowing of the herds,

Day, when I lost the flower of men ;

Who tremblest thro' thy darkling red

On yon swoll'n brook that bubbles  
fast

By meadows breathing of the past,  
And woodlands holy to the dead ;

Who murmurest in the foliaged eaves

A song that slights the coming care,

And Autumn laying here and there

A fiery finger on the leaves ;

Who wakenest with thy balmy breath

To myriads on the genial earth,

Memories of bridal, or, of birth,

And unto myriads more, of death.

O wheresoever those may be,

Betwixt the slumber of the poles,

To-day they count as kindred souls ;

They know me not, but mourn with  
me.

## C.

I CLIMB the hill : from end to end

Of all the landscape underneath,

I find no place that does not breathe

Some gracious memory of my friend ;

No gray old grange, or lonely fold,

Or low morass and whispering reed,

Or simple stile from mead to mead,

Or sheepwalk up the windy wold ;

Nor hoary knoll of ash and haw

That hears the latest linnets trill,

Nor quarry trench'd along the hill,

And haunted by the wrangling daw ;

Nor runlet tinkling from the rock ;

Nor pastoral rivulet that swerves

To left and right thro' meadowy  
curves,  
That feed the mothers of the flock ;  
But each has pleased a kindred eye,  
And each reflects a kindlier day ;  
And, leaving these, to pass away,  
I think once more he seems to di

## CI.

UNWATCH'D, the garden bough shall  
sway,  
The tender blossom flutter down,  
Unloved, that beech will gather  
brown,  
This maple burn itself away

Unloved, the sun-flower, shining fair,  
Ray round with flames her disk of  
seed,

And many a rose-carnation feed  
With summer spice the humming air ;

Unloved, by many a sandy bar,  
The brook shall babble down the  
plain,

At noon or when the lesser wain  
Is twisting round the polar star ;

Uncared for, gird the windy grove,  
And flood the haunts of hern and  
crake ;

Or into silver arrows break  
The sailing moon in creek and cove ;

Till from the garden and the wild  
A fresh association blow,  
And year by year the landscape grow  
Familiar to the stranger's child ;

As year by year the laborer tills  
His wonted glebe, or lops the glades ;  
And year by year our memory fades  
From all the circle of the hills.

## CII.

WE leave the well-beloved place  
Where first we gazed upon the sky ;  
The roofs, that heard our earliest  
cry,

Will shelter one of stranger race.

We go, but ere we go from home,  
As down the garden-walks I move,  
Two spirits of a diverse love  
Contend for loving masterdom.

One whispers, here thy boyhood sung  
Long since its matin song, and heard  
The low love-language of the bird  
In native hazels tassel-hung.

The other answers, "Yea, but here  
Thy feet have stray'd in after hours  
With thy lost friend among the  
bowers,

And this bath made them trebly dear."

These two have striven half the day,  
And each prefers his separate claim,  
Poor rivals in a losing game,  
That will not yield each other way.

I turn to go ; my feet are set  
To leave the pleasant fields and  
farms ;

They mix in one another's arms  
To one pure image of regret.

## CIII.

ON that last night before we went  
From out the doors where I was  
bred,

I dream'd a vision of the dead,  
Which left my after-morn content.

Methought I dwelt within a hall,  
And maidens with me : distant hills  
From hidden summits fed with rills  
A river sliding by the wall.

The hall with harp and carol rang.  
They sang of what is wise and good  
And graceful. In the centre stood  
A statue veil'd, to which they sang ;

And which, tho' veil'd, was known to  
me,

The shape of him I loved, and love  
For ever : then flew in a dove  
And brought a summons from the sea :

And when they learnt that I must go  
They wept and wail'd, but led the  
way

To where a little shallop lay  
At anchor in the flood below ;

And on by many a level mead,  
And shadowing bluff that made the  
banks,

We glided winding under ranks  
Of iris, and the golden reed ;

And still as vaster grew the shore,  
And roll'd the floods in grander  
space,

The maidens gather'd strength and  
grace

And presence, lordlier than before ;

And I myself, who sat apart  
And watch'd them, wax'd in every  
limb ;

I felt the thews of Anakim,  
The pulses of a Titan's heart ;

As one would sing the death of war,  
And one would chant the history  
Of that great race, which is to be,  
And one the shaping of a star ;

Until the forward-creeping tides  
Began to foam, and we to draw  
From deep to deep, to where we saw  
A great ship lift her shining sides.

The man we loved was there on deck,  
But thrice as large as man he bent  
To greet us. Up the side I went,  
And fell in silence on his neck :

Whereat those maidens with one mind  
Bewail'd their lot ; I did them wrong :

"We served thee here," they said,  
"so long,

And wilt thou leave us now behind ?"

So rapt I was, they could not win  
An answer from my lips, but he

Replying "Enter likewise ye  
And go with us : " they enter'd in.

And while the wind began to sweep  
A music out of sheet and shroud,  
We steer'd her toward a crimson  
cloud  
That landlike slept along the deep.

## CIV.

THE time draws near the birth of  
Christ ;

The moon is hid, the night is still ;  
A single church below the hill  
Is pealing, folded in the mist.

A single peal of bells below,  
That wakens at this hour of rest  
A single murmur in the breast,  
That these are not the bells I know.

Like stranger's voices here they sound,  
In lands where not a memory strays,  
Nor landmark breathes of other days,  
But all is new unhallow'd ground.

## CV.

TO-NIGHT ungather'd let us leave  
This laurel, let this holly stand :  
We live within the stranger's land,  
And strangely falls our Christmas eve.

Our father's dust is left alone  
And silent under other snows :  
There in due time the wood-bine  
blows,

The violet comes, but we are gone.

No more shall wayward grief abuse  
The genial hour with mask and mime ;  
For chance of place, like growth of  
time,

Has broke the bond of dying use.

Let cares that petty shadows cast,  
By which our lives are chiefly proved,  
A little spare the night I loved,  
And hold it solemn to the past.

But let no footsteps beat the floor,  
Nor bowl of wassail mantle warm ;  
For who would keep an ancient form  
Thro' which the spirit breathes no  
more ?

Be neither song, nor game, nor feast ;  
Nor harp be touch'd, nor flute be  
blown ;

No dance, no motion, save alone  
What lightens in the lucid east

Of rising worlds by yonder wood.  
Long sleeps the summer in the seed ;  
Run out your measured arcs, and  
lead

The closing cycle rich in good.

## CVI.

RING out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light :  
The year is dying in the night :

RING out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow :  
The year is going, let him go ;

RING out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
For those that here we see no more ;  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife ;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times ;  
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
The civic slander and the spite ;  
Ring in the love of truth and right,  
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease ;  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold ;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand ;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

## CVII.

IT is the day when he was born,  
A bitter day that early sank  
Behind a purple-frosty bank  
Of vapor, leaving night forlorn.

The time admits not flowers or leaves  
To deck the banquet. Fiercely flies  
The blast of North and East, and ice  
Makes daggers at the sharpen'd eaves,

And bristles all the brakes and thorns  
To yon hard crescent, as she hangs  
About the wood which grides and  
clangs

Its leafless ribs and iron horns  
Together in the drifts that pass  
To darken on the rolling brine  
That breaks the coast. But fetch the  
wine,

Arrange the board and brim the glass ;  
Bring in great logs and let them lie,  
To make a solid core of heat ;  
Be cheerful-minded, talk and treat  
Of all things ev'n as he were by ;

We keep the day. With festal cheer,  
With books and music, surely we  
Will drink to him, whate'er he be,  
And sing the songs he loved to hear.

## CVIII.

I WILL not shut me from my kind,  
And, lest I stiffen into stone,  
I will not eat my heart alone,  
Nor feed with sighs a passing wind :

What profit lies in barren faith,  
And vacant yearning, tho' with  
might

To scale the heaven's highest height,  
Or dive below the wells of Death ?

What find I in the highest place,  
 But mine own phantom chanting  
 hymns?  
 And on the depths of death there  
 swims  
 The reflex of a human face.  
 I'll rather take what fruit may be  
 Of sorrow under human skies:  
 'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise,  
 Whatever wisdom sleep with thee.

## CIX.

HEART-AFFLUENCE in discursive talk  
 From household fountains never dry;  
 The critic clearness of an eye,  
 That saw thro' all the Muses' walk;  
 Seraphic intellect and force  
 To seize and throw the doubts of  
 man;  
 Impassion'd logic, which outran  
 The hearer in its fiery course;  
 High nature amorous of the good,  
 But touch'd with no ascetic gloom;  
 And passion pure in snowy bloom  
 Thro' all the years of April bloom;  
 A love of freedom rarely felt,  
 Of freedom in her regal seat  
 Of England; not the schoolboy heat,  
 The blind hysterics of the Celt;  
 And manhood fused with female grace  
 In such a sort, the child would twine  
 A trustful hand, unask'd, in thine,  
 And find his comfort in thy face;  
 All these have been, and thee mine  
 eyes  
 Have look'd on : if they look'd in  
 vain,  
 My shame is greater who remain,  
 Nor let thy wisdom make me wise.

## CX.

Thy converse drew us with delight,  
 The men of rathe and riper years;  
 The feeble soul, a haunt of fears,  
 Forgot his weakness in thy sight.  
 On thee the loyal-hearted hung,  
 The proud was half disarm'd of  
 pride,  
 Nor cared the serpent at thy side  
 To flicker with his double tongue.  
 The stern were mild when thou wert by,  
 The dippant put himself to school  
 And heard thee, and the brazen fool  
 Was soften'd, and he knew not why;  
 While I, thy dearest, sat apart,  
 And felt thy triumph was as mine;  
 And loved them more, that they were  
 thine,  
 The graceful tact, the Christian art;  
 Not mine the sweetness of the skill,  
 But mine the love, that will not tire,  
 And, born of love, the vague desire  
 That spurs an imitative will.

## CXI.

THE churl in spirit, up or down  
 Along the scale of ranks, thro' all,

'To him who grasps a golden ball,  
 By blood a king, at heart a clown;  
 The churl in spirit, howe'er he veil  
 His want in forms for fashion's sake  
 Will let his coltish nature break  
 At seasons thro' the gilded pale:  
 For who can always act? but he,  
 To whom a thousand memories call,  
 Not being less but more than all  
 The gentleness he seem'd to be,  
 Best seem'd the thing he was, and  
 join'd  
 Each office of the social hour  
 To noble manners, as the flower  
 And native growth of noble mind;  
 Nor ever narrowness or spite,  
 Or villain fancy fleeting by,  
 Drew in the expression of an eye,  
 Where God and Nature met in light;  
 And thus he bore without abuse  
 The grand old name of gentleman,  
 Defamed by every charlatan,  
 And soil'd with all ignoble use.

## CXII.

HIGH wisdom holds my wisdom less,  
 That I, who gaze with temperate eyes  
 On glorious insufficiencies,  
 Set light by narrow perfectness.  
 But thou, that fillest all the room  
 Of all my love, art reason why  
 I seem to cast a careless eye  
 On souls, the lesser lords of doom.  
 For what wert thou? some novel  
 power  
 Sprang up for ever at a touch,  
 And hope could never hope too  
 much,  
 In watching thee from hour to hour,  
 Large elements in order brought,  
 And tracts of calm from tempest  
 made,  
 And world-wide fluctuation sway'd,  
 In vassal tides that follow'd thought.

## CXII.

'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise;  
 Yet how much wisdom sleeps with  
 thee  
 Which not alone had guided me,  
 But served the seasons that may rise;  
 For can I doubt, who knew the keen  
 In intellect, with force and skill  
 To strive, to fashion, to fulfil—  
 I doubt not what thou wouldst have  
 been :  
 A life in civic action warm,  
 A soul on highest mission sent,  
 A potent voice of Parliament,  
 A pillar steadfast in the storm,  
 Should licensed boldness gather force  
 Becoming, when the time has birth,  
 A lever to uplift the earth  
 And roll it in another course,

With thousand shocks that come and  
go,  
With agonies, with energies,  
With overthrowings, and with cries,  
And undulations to and fro.

## CXIV.

Who loves not Knowledge? Who shall  
rail  
Against her beauty? May she mix  
With men and prosper! Who shall  
fix  
Her pillars? Let her work prevail.  
But on her forehead sits a fire:  
She sets her forward countenance  
And leaps into the future chance,  
Submitting all things to desire.  
Half-grown as yet, a child, and vain—  
She cannot fight the fear of death.  
What is she, cut from love and faith,  
But some wild Pallas from the brain  
Of Demons? fiery-hot to burst  
Ail barriers in her onward race  
For power. Let her know her place;  
She is the second, not the first.  
A higher hand must make her mild,  
If all be not in vain; and guide  
Her footsteps, moving side by side  
With wisdom, like the younger child:  
For she is earthly of the mind,  
But Wisdom heavenly of the soul.  
O, friend, who camest to thy goal  
So early, leaving me behind,  
I would the great world grew like thee,  
Who grewest not alone in power  
And knowledge, but by year and hour  
In reverence and in charity.

## CXV.

Now fades the last long streak of snow,  
Now bourgeois every maze of quick  
About the flowering squares, and  
thick  
By ashens roots the violets blow.  
Now rings the woodland loud and long,  
The distance takes a lovelier hue,  
And drown'd in yonder living blue  
The lark becomes a sightless song.  
Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,  
The flocks are whiter down the vale,  
And milkier every milky sail  
On winding stream or distant sea;  
Where now the seamew pipes, or dives  
In yonder greening gleam, and fly  
The happy birds, that change their  
sky  
To build and brood; that live their  
lives  
From land to land; and in my breast  
Spring wakens too; and my regret  
Becomes an April violet,  
And buds and blossoms like the rest.

## CXVI.

Is it, then, regret for buried time  
That keener in sweet April wakes,

And meets the year, and gives and  
takes  
The colours of the crescent prime?

Not all: the songs, the stirring air,  
The life re-orient out of dust,  
Cry thro' the sense to hearten trust  
In that which made the world so fair.

Not all regret; the face will shine  
Upon me, while I muse alone;  
And that dear voice, I once have  
known,

Still speak to me of me and mine:

Yet less of sorrow lives in me  
For days of happy commune dead;  
Less yearning for the friendship fled,  
Than some strong bond which is to be.

## CXVII.

O DAYS and hours, your work is this,  
To hold me from my proper place,  
A little while from his embrace,  
For fuller gain of after bliss:

That out of distance might ensue  
Desire of nearness doubly sweet;  
And unto meeting when we meet,  
Delight a hundredfold accrue,

For every grain of sand that runs,  
And every span of shade that steals,  
And every kiss of toothed wheels,  
And all the courses of the suns.

## CXVIII.

CONTEMPLATE all this work of Time,  
The giant laboring in his youth;  
Nor dream of human love and truth,  
As dying nature's earth and lime;

But trust that those we call the dead  
Are breathers of an ampler day  
For ever nobler ends. They say,  
The solid earth whereon we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,  
And grew to seeming-random forms,  
The seeming prey of cyclic storms,  
Till at the last arose the man;

Who throve and branch'd from clime  
to clime,

The herald of a higher race,  
And of himself in higher place  
If so he type this work of time

Within himself, from more to more,  
Or, crown'd with attributes of woe  
Like glories, move his course and  
show

That life is not as idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,  
And heated hot with burning fears,  
And dipt in baths of hissing tears,  
And batter'd with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly  
The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;  
Move upward, working out the beast,  
And let the ape and tiger die.

## CXIX.

DOORS, where my heart was used to  
beat  
So quickly, not as one that weeps  
I come once more ; the city sleeps ;  
I smell the meadow in the street ;  
I hear a chirp of birds ; I see  
Betwixt the black fronts long-with-  
drawn  
A light-blue lane of early dawn,  
And think of early days and thee,  
And bless thee, for thy lips are bland  
And bright the friendship of thine  
eye ;  
And in my thoughts with scarce a  
sigh  
I take the pressure of thine hand.

## CXX.

I TRUST I have not wasted breath :  
I think we are not wholly brain,  
Magnetic mockeries ; not in vain,  
Like Paul with beasts, I fought with  
Death ;  
Not only cunning casts in clay :  
Let Science prove we are, and then  
What matters Science unto men,  
At least to me ? I would not stay.  
Let him, the wiser man who springs  
Hereafter, up from childhood shape  
His action like the greater ape,  
But I was born to other things.

## CXXI.

SAD Hesper o'er the buried sun  
And ready, thou, to die with him,  
Thou watchest all things ever dim  
And dimmer, and a glory done :  
The team is loosen'd from the wain,  
The boat is drawn upon the shore ;  
Thou listenest to the closing door,  
And life is darken'd in the brain.  
Bright Phosphor, fresher for the night,  
By thee the world's great work is  
heard  
Beginning, and the wakeful bird ;  
Behind thee comes the greater light :  
The market boat is on the stream,  
And voices hail it from the brink ;  
Thou hear'st the village hammer  
clink,  
And see'st the moving of the team.  
Sweet Hesper-Phosphor, double name  
For what is one, the first, the last,  
Thou, like my present and my past,  
Thy place is changed ; thou art the  
same.

## CXXII.

O, WAST thou with me, dearest then,  
While I rose up against my doom,  
And yearn'd to burst the folded  
gloom,  
To bare the eternal Heavens again,  
To feel once more, in placid awe,  
The strong imagination roll

A sphere of stars about my soul,  
In all her motion one with law ;  
If thou wert with me, and the grave  
Divide us not, be with me now,  
And enter in at breast and brow,  
Till all my blood, a fuller wave,  
Be quicken'd with a livelier breath,  
And like an inconsiderate boy,  
As in the former flash of joy,  
I slip the thoughts of life and death ;  
And all the breeze of Fancy blows,  
And every dew-drop paints a bow,  
The wizard lightnings deeply glow,  
And every thought breaks out a rose.

## CXXIII.

THERE rolls the deep where grew the  
tree.  
O earth, what changes hast thou  
seen !  
There where the long street roars,  
hath been  
The stillness of the central sea.  
The hills are shadows, and they flow  
From form to form, and nothing  
stands ;  
They melt like mist, the solid lands,  
Like clouds they shape themselves and  
go.  
But in my spirit will I dwell,  
And dream my dream, and hold it  
true ;  
For tho' my lips may breathe adieu,  
I cannot think the thing farewell.

## CXXIV.

THAT which we dare invoke to bless ;  
Our dearest faith ; our ghastliest  
doubt ;  
He, They, One, All ; within, without ;  
The Power in darkness whom we  
guess ;  
I found Him not in world or sun,  
Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye ;  
Nor thro' the questions men may try,  
The petty cobwebs we have spun :  
If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,  
I heard a voice " believe no more "  
And heard an ever breaking shore  
That tumbled in the Godless deep ;  
A warmth within the breast would  
melt  
The freezing reason's colder part,  
And like a man in wrath the heart  
Stood up and answer'd " I have felt."  
No, like a child in doubt and fear :  
But that blind clamor made me wise ;  
Then was I as a child that cries,  
But, crying, knows his father near ;  
And what I am beheld again  
What is, and no man understands ;  
And out of darkness came the hands  
That reach thro' nature, moulding  
men.

## CXXV.

WHATEVER I have said or sung,  
 Some bitter notes my harp would  
 give,  
 Yea, tho' there often seem'd to live  
 A contradiction on the tongue,  
 Yet Hope had never lost her youth ;  
 She did but look through dimmer  
 eyes ;  
 Or Love but play'd with gracious  
 lies,  
 Because he felt so fix'd in truth :  
 And if the song were full of care,  
 He breathed the spirit of the song ;  
 And if the words were sweet and  
 strong,  
 He set his royal signet there ;  
 Abiding with me till I sail  
 To seek thee on the mystic deeps,  
 And this electric force, that keeps  
 A thousand pulses dancing, fail.

## CXXVI.

LOVE is and was my Lord and King,  
 And in his presence I attend  
 To hear the tidings of my friend,  
 Which every hour his couriers bring.  
 Love is and was my King and Lord.  
 And will be, tho' as yet I keep  
 Within his court on earth, and  
 sleep  
 Encompass'd by his faithful guard,  
 And hear at times a sentinel  
 Who moves about from place to  
 place,  
 And whispers to the worlds of space,  
 In the deep night, that all is well.

## CXXVII.

AND all is well, tho' faith and form  
 Be sunder'd in the night of fear ;  
 Well roars the storm to those that  
 hear  
 A deeper voice across the storm,  
 Proclaiming social truth shall spread,  
 And justice, ev'n tho' thrice again  
 The red fool-fury of the Seine  
 Should pile her barricades with dead.  
 But ill for him that wears a crown,  
 And him, the lazar, in his rags :  
 They tremble, the sustaining crags ;  
 The spires of ice are toppled down,  
 And molten up, and roar in flood ;  
 The fortress crashes from on high,  
 The brute earth lightens to the sky,  
 And the great Æon sinks in blood,  
 And compass'd by the fires of Hell ;  
 While thou, dear spirit, happy star,  
 O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,  
 And smilest, knowing all is well.

## CXXVIII.

THE love that rose on stronger wings,  
 Unpalsied when he met with Death,  
 Is comrade of the lesser faith  
 That sees the course of human things

No doubt vast eddies in the flood  
 Of onward time shall yet be made,  
 And throned races may degrade ;  
 Yet, O ye mysteries of good,  
 Wild Hours that fly with Hope and  
 Fear,  
 If all your office had to do  
 With old results that look like new ;  
 If this were all your mission here,  
 To draw, to sheathe a useless sword,  
 To fool the crowd with glorious lies,  
 To cleave a creed in sects and cries,  
 To change the bearing of a word,  
 To shift an arbitrary power,  
 To cram the student at his desk,  
 To make old bareness picturesque  
 And tuft with grass a feudal tower ;  
 Why then my scorn might well de-  
 scend  
 On you and yours. I see in part  
 That all, as in some piece of art,  
 Is toil coöperant to an end.

## CXXIX.

DEAR friend, far off, my lost desire,  
 So far, so near in woe and weal ;  
 O loved the most, when most I feel  
 There is a lower and a higher ;  
 Known and unknown ; human, divine ;  
 Sweet human hand and lips and eye ;  
 Dear heavenly friend that canst not  
 die,  
 Mine, mine, for ever, ever mine ;  
 Strange friend, past, present, and to  
 be ;  
 Love deeper, darker understood ;  
 Behold, I dream a dream of good,  
 And mingle all the world with thee.

## CXXX.

THY voice is on the rolling air ;  
 I hear thee where the waters run ;  
 Thou standest in the rising sun,  
 And in the setting thou art fair.  
 What art thou then ? I cannot guess ;  
 But tho' I seem in star and flower  
 To feel thee some diffusive power,  
 I do not therefore love thee less :  
 My love involves the love before ;  
 My love is vaster passion now ;  
 Tho' mix'd with God and Nature  
 thou,  
 I seem to love thee more and more.  
 Far off thou art, but ever nigh ;  
 I have thee still, and I rejoice ;  
 I prosper, circled with thy voice ;  
 I shall not lose thee tho' I die.

## CXXXI.

O LIVING will that shalt endure  
 When all that seems shall suffer  
 shock,  
 Rise in the spiritual rock,  
 Flow thro' cur deeds and make them  
 pure,

That we may lift from out of dust  
 A voice as unto him that hears,  
 A cry above the conquer'd years  
 To one that with us works, and trust,  
 With faith that comes of self-control,  
 The truths that never can be proved  
 Until we close with all we loved,  
 And all we flow from, soul in soul.

O TRUE and tried, so well and long,  
 Demand not thou a marriage lay;  
 In that it is thy marriage day  
 Is music more than any song.

Nor have I felt so much of bliss  
 Since first he told me that he loved  
 A daughter of our house; nor proved  
 Since that dark day a day like this;

Tho' I since then have number'd o'er  
 Some thrice three years: they went  
 and came,

Remade the blood and changed the  
 frame,

And yet is love not less, but more;

No longer caring to embalm  
 In dying songs a dead regret,  
 But like a statue solid-set,  
 And moulded in colossal calm.

Regret is dead, but love is more  
 Than in the summers that are flown,  
 For I myself with these have grown  
 To something greater than before;

Which makes appear the songs I made  
 As echoes out of weaker times,  
 As half but idle brawling rhymes,  
 The sport of random sun and shade.

But where is she, the bridal flower,  
 That must be made a wife ere noon?  
 She enters, glowing like the moon  
 Of Eden on its bridal bower:

On me she bends her blissful eyes  
 And then on thee; they meet thy  
 look

And brighten like the star that shook  
 Betwixt the palms of paradise.

O when her life was yet in bud,  
 He too foretold the perfect rose.  
 For thee she grew, for thee she  
 grows

For ever, and as fair as good.

And thou art worthy; full of power;  
 As gentle; liberal-minded, great,  
 Consistent; wearing all that weight  
 Of learning lightly like a flower.

But now set out: the noon is near,  
 And I must give away the bride;  
 She fears not, or with thee beside  
 And me behind her, will not fear:

For I that danced her on my knee,  
 That watch'd her on her nurse's arm,  
 That shielded all her life from harm,  
 At last must part with her to thee;

Now waiting to be made a wife,  
 Her feet, my darling, on the dead;

Their pensive tablets round her head,  
 And the most living words of life

Breathed in her ear. The ring is on,  
 The "wilt thou" answer'd, and  
 again

The "wilt thou" ask'd, till out of  
 twain

Her sweet "I will" has made ye one.

Now sign your names, which shall be  
 read,

Mute symbols of a joyful morn,  
 By village eyes as yet unborn;  
 The names are sign'd, and overhead

Begins the clash and clang that tells  
 The joy to every wandering breeze;  
 The blind wall rocks, and on the  
 trees

The dead leaf trembles to the bells.

O happy hour, and happier hours  
 Await them. Many a merry face  
 Salutes them—maidens of the place,  
 That pelt us in the porch with flowers.

O happy hour, behold the bride  
 With him to whom her hand I gave.  
 They leave the porch, they pass the  
 grave

That has to-day its sunny side.

To-day the grave is bright for me,  
 For them the light of life increased,  
 Who stay to share the morning feast,  
 Who rest to-night beside the sea.

Let all my genial spirits advance  
 To meet and greet a whiter sun;  
 My drooping memory will not shun  
 The foaming grape of eastern France.

It circles round, and fancy plays,  
 And hearts are warm'd, and faces  
 bloom,

As drinking health to bride and  
 groom

We wish them store of happy days.

Nor count me all to blame if I  
 Conjecture of a stiller guest,  
 Perchance, perchance, among the  
 rest,

And, tho' in silence, wishing joy.

But they must go, the time draws on,  
 And those white-favor'd horses wait;  
 They rise, but linger; it is late;  
 Farewell, we kiss, and they are gone.

A shade falls on us like the dark  
 From little cloudlets on the grass,  
 But sweeps away as out we pass  
 To range the woods, to roam the park,

Discussing how their courtship grew,  
 And talk of others that are wed,  
 And how she look'd, and what he  
 said,

And back we come at fall of dew.

Again the feast, the speech, the glee,  
 The shade of passing thought, the  
 wealth

Of words and wit, the double health,  
 The crowning cup, the three-times  
 three,

And last the dance ; — till I retire ;  
 Dumb is that tower which spake so  
 loud,  
 And high in heaven the streaming  
 cloud,  
 And on the downs a rising fire :  
 And rise, O moon, from yonder down  
 Till over down and over dale  
 All night the shining vapor sail  
 And pass the silent-lighted town,  
 The white-faced halls, the glancing  
 rills,  
 And catch at every mountain head,  
 And o'er the friths that branch and  
 spread  
 Their sleeping silver thro' the hills ;  
 And touch with shade the bridal doors,  
 With tender gloom the roof, the  
 wall :  
 And breaking let the splendor fall  
 To spangle all the happy shores  
 By which they rest, and ocean sounds,  
 And, star and system rolling past,  
 A soul shall draw from out the vast  
 And strike his being into bounds,  
 And, moved thro' life of lower phase,  
 Result in man, be born and think,  
 And act and love, a closer link  
 Betwixt us and the crowning race  
 Of those that, eye to eye, shall look  
 On knowledge ; under whose com-  
 mand  
 Is Earth and Earth's, and in their  
 hand  
 Is Nature like an open book ;  
 No longer half-akin to brute,  
 For all we thought and loved and  
 did,  
 And hoped, and suffer'd, is but seed  
 Of what in them is flower and fruit ;  
 Whereof the man, that with me trod  
 This planet, was a noble type  
 Appearing ere the times were ripe,  
 That friend of mine who lives in God,  
 That God, which ever lives and loves,  
 One God, one law, one element,  
 And one far-off divine event,  
 To which the whole creation moves.

THE PRINCESS: A MEDLEY.

PROLOGUE.

SIR WALTER VIVIAN all a summer's  
 day  
 Gave his broad lawns until the set of  
 sun  
 Up to the people : thither flock'd at  
 noon  
 His tenants, wife and child, and thith-  
 er half  
 The neighboring borough with their  
 Institute  
 Of which he was the patron. I was  
 there

From college, visiting the son, — the  
 son  
 A Walter too, — with others of our set,  
 Five others : we were seven at Vivian-  
 place.

And me that morning Walter show'd  
 the house,  
 Greek, set with busts : from vases in  
 the hall  
 Flowers of all heavens, and lovelier  
 than their names,  
 Grew side by side ; and on the pave-  
 ment lay  
 Carved stones of the Abbey-ruin in the  
 park,  
 Huge Ammonites, and the first bones  
 of Time :  
 And on the tables every clime and age  
 Jumbled together ; celts and calumets,  
 Claymore and snowshoe, toys in lava,  
 fans  
 Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,  
 Laborious orient ivory sphere in  
 sphere,  
 The cursed Malayan crease, and bat-  
 tle-clubs  
 From the isles of palm : and higher on  
 the walls,  
 Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk  
 and deer,  
 His own forefathers' arms and armor  
 hung.

And " this " he said " was Hugh's at  
 Agincourt ;  
 And that was old Sir Ralph's at Asca-  
 lon :  
 A good knight he ! we keep a chronicle  
 With all about him " — which he  
 brought, and I  
 Dived in a hoard of tales that dealt  
 with knights  
 Half-legend, half-historic, counts and  
 kings  
 Who laid about them at their wills and  
 died ;  
 And mixt with these, a lady, one that  
 arm'd  
 Her own fair head, and sallying thro'  
 the gate,  
 Had beat her foes with slaughter from  
 her walls.

" O miracle of women," said the  
 book,  
 " O noble heart who, being strait-be-  
 sieged  
 By this wild king to force her to his  
 wish,  
 Nor bent, nor broke, nor shunn'd a  
 soldier's death,  
 But now when all was lost or seem'd  
 as lost —  
 Her stature more than mortal in the  
 burst  
 Of sunrise, her arm lifted, eyes on  
 fire —  
 Brake with a blast of trumpets from  
 the gate,

And, falling on them like a thunder-bolt,  
 She trampled some beneath her horses' heels,  
 And some were whelm'd with missiles of the wall,  
 And some were push'd with lances from the rock,  
 And part were drown'd within the whirling brook :  
 O miracle of noble womanhood !"

So sang the gallant glorious chronicle ;  
 And, I all rapt in this, "Come out," he said,  
 "To the Abbey : there is Aunt Elizabeth  
 And sister Lilia with the rest." We went  
 (I kept the book and had my finger in it)  
 Down thro' the park : strange was the sight to me ;  
 For all the sloping pasture murmur'd, sown  
 With happy faces and with holiday.  
 There moved the multitude, a thousand heads :  
 The patient leaders of their Institute  
 Taught them with facts. One rear'd a font of stone  
 And drew, from butts of water on the slope,  
 The fountain of the moment, playing now  
 A twisted snake, and now a rain of pearls,  
 Or steep-up spout whereon the gilded ball  
 Danced like a wisp : and somewhat lower down  
 A man with knobs and wires and vials fired  
 A cannon : Echo answer'd in her sleep  
 From hollow fields : and here were telescopes  
 For azure views ; and there a group of girls  
 In circle waited, whom the electric shock  
 Dislink'd with shrieks and laughter : round the lake  
 A little clock-work steamer paddling plied  
 And shook the lilies : perch'd about the knolls  
 A dozen angry models jetted steam :  
 A petty railway ran ; a fire-balloon  
 Rose gem-like up before the dusky groves  
 And dropt a fairy paraclute and past :  
 And there thro' twenty posts of telegraph  
 They flash'd a saucy message to and fro  
 Between the mimic stations ; so that sport  
 Went hand in hand with Science ;  
 elsewhere

Pure sport : a herd of boys with clamor bowl'd  
 And stump'd the wicket ; babies roll'd about  
 Like tumbled fruit in grass ; and men and maids  
 Arranged a country dance, and flew thro' light  
 And shadow, while the twangling violin  
 Struck up with Soldier-laddie, and overhead  
 The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty lime  
 Made noise with bees and breeze from end to end.

Strange was the sight and smacking of the time ;  
 And long we gazed, but satiated at length  
 Came to the ruins. High-arch'd and ivy-claspt,  
 Of finest Gothic lighter than a fire,  
 Thro' one wide chasm of time and frost they gave  
 The park, the crowd, the house ; but all within  
 The sward was trim as any garden lawn :  
 And here we lit on Aunt Elizabeth, And Lilia with the rest, and lady friends  
 From neighbor seats : and there was Ralph himself,  
 A broken statue propt against the wall,  
 As gay as any. Lilia, wild with sport,  
 Half child half woman as she was, had wound  
 A scarf of orange round the stony helm,  
 And robed the shoulders in a rosy silk,  
 That made the old warrior from his ivied nook  
 Glow like a sunbeam : near his tomb a feast  
 Shone, silver-set ; about it lay the guests,  
 And there we join'd them : then the maiden Aunt  
 Took this fair day for text, and from it preach'd  
 An universal culture for the crowd,  
 And all things great ; but we, unwor-thier, told  
 Of college : he had climb'd across the spikes,  
 And he had squeezed himself betwixt the bars,  
 And he had breath'd the Proctor's dogs ; and one  
 Discuss'd his tutor, rough to common men,  
 But honeying at the whisper of a lord ;  
 And one the Master, as a rogue in grain  
 Veneer'd with sanctimonious theory.  
 But while they talk'd, above their heads I saw  
 The feudal warrior lady-clad ; which brought

My book to mind: and opening this I  
 read  
 Of old Sir Ralph a page or two that  
 rang  
 With tilt and tourney; then the tale  
 of her  
 That drove her foes with slaughter  
 from her walls,  
 And much I praised her nobleness, and  
 "Where."  
 Ask'd Walter, patting Lilia's head (she  
 lay  
 Beside him) "lives there such a woman  
 now?"

Quick answer'd Lilia "There are  
 thousands now  
 Such women, but convention beats  
 them down:  
 It is but bringing up; no more than  
 that:  
 You men have done it: how I hate you  
 all!  
 Ah, were I something great! I wish I  
 were  
 Some mighty poetess, I would shame  
 you then,  
 That love to keep us children! O I  
 wish  
 That I were some great princess, I  
 would build  
 Far off from men a college like a  
 man's,  
 And I would teach them all that men  
 are taught;  
 We are twice as quick!" And here  
 she shook aside  
 The hand that play'd the patron with  
 her curls.

And one said smiling "Pretty were  
 the sight  
 If our old halls could change their sex,  
 and flaunt  
 With prudes for proctors, dowagers  
 for deans,  
 And sweet girl-graduates in their gold-  
 en hair.  
 I think they should not wear our rusty  
 gowns,  
 But move as rich as Emperor-moths,  
 or Ralph  
 Who shines so in the corner; yet I  
 fear,  
 If there were many Lilies in the brood,  
 However deep you might embower the  
 nest,  
 Some boy would spy it."

At this upon the sword  
 She tapt her tiny silken-sandal'd foot:  
 "That's your light way; but I would  
 make it death  
 For any male thing but to peep at us."

Petulant she spoke, and at herself  
 she laugh'd;  
 A rosebud set with little wilful thorns,  
 And sweet as English air could make  
 her, she:  
 But Walter hail'd a score of names  
 upon her,

And "petty Ogress," and "ungrateful  
 Puss,"  
 And swore he long'd at college, only  
 long'd,  
 All else was well, for she-society,  
 They boated and they cricketed; they  
 talk'd  
 At wine, in clubs, of art, of politics;  
 They lost their weeks; they vex't the  
 souls of deans;  
 They rode; they betted; made a hun-  
 dred friends,  
 And caught the blossom of the flying  
 terms,  
 But miss'd the mignonette of Vivian-  
 place,  
 The little hearth-flower Lilia. Thus  
 he spoke,  
 Part banter, part affection.  
 "True," she said,  
 "We doubt not that. O yes, you miss'd  
 us much.  
 I'll stake my ruby ring upon it you  
 did."

She held it out; and as a parrot  
 turns  
 Up thro' gilt wires a crafty loving eye,  
 And takes a lady's finger with all care,  
 And bites it for true heart and not for  
 harm,  
 So he with Lilia's. Daintily she  
 shriek'd  
 And wrung it. "Doubt my word  
 again!" he said.  
 "Come, listen! here is proof that you  
 were miss'd:  
 We seven stay'd at Christmas up to  
 read;  
 And there we took one tutor as to read;  
 The hard-grain'd Muses of the cube  
 and square  
 Were out of season: never man, I  
 think,  
 So moulder'd in a sinecure as he:  
 For while our cloisters echo'd frosty  
 feet,  
 And our long walks were stript as bare  
 as brooms,  
 We did but talk you over, pledge you  
 all  
 In wassail; often, like as many girls—  
 Sick for the hollies and the yews of  
 home—  
 As many little trifling Lilies—play'd  
 Charades and riddles as at Christmas  
 here,  
 And *what's my thought* and *when* and  
*where* and *how*,  
 And often told a tale from mouth to  
 mouth  
 As here at Christmas."

She remember'd that.  
 A pleasant game, she thought: she  
 liked it more  
 Than magic music, forfeits, all the  
 rest.  
 But these—what kind of tales did men  
 tell men,  
 She wonder'd, by themselves?

A half-disdain  
Perch'd on the pouted blossom of her  
lips:  
And Walter nodded at me; "He began,  
The rest would follow, each in turn;  
and so  
We forged a sevenfold story. Kind?  
what kind?  
Chimeras, crotchets, Christmas sole-  
cisms,  
Seven-headed monsters only made to  
kill  
Time by the fire in winter."

"Kill him now,  
The tyrant! kill him in the summer  
too,"  
Said Lilia; "Why not now," the maid-  
en Aunt.  
"Why not a summer's as a winter's  
tale?"

A tale for summer as befits the time,  
And something it should be to suit the  
place  
Heroic, for a hero lies beneath,  
Grave, solemn!"

Walter warp'd his mouth at this  
To something so mock-solemn, that I  
laugh'd,  
And Lilia woke with sudden-shrilling  
mirth  
An echo like a ghostly woodpecker,  
Hid in the ruins; till the maiden  
Aunt  
(A little sense of wrong had touch'd  
her face  
With color) turn'd to me with "As  
you will;  
Heroic if you will, or what you will,  
Or be yourself your hero if you will."

"Take Lilia, then, for heroine"  
clamor'd he,  
"And make her some great Princess,  
six feet high,  
Grand, epic, homicidal; and be you  
The Prince to win her!"  
"Then follow me, the Prince,"  
I answer'd, "each be hero in his turn!  
Seven and yet one, like shadows in a  
dream.—  
Heroic seems our Princess as re-  
quired—  
But something made to suit with Time  
and place,  
A Gothic ruin and a Grecian house,  
A talk of college and of ladies' rights,  
A feudal knight in silken masquerade,  
And, yonder, shrieks and strange ex-  
periments  
For which the good Sir Ralph had  
burnt them all—  
This *were* a medley! we should have  
him back  
Who told the 'Winter's tale' to do it  
for us.  
No matter: we will say whatever  
comes.  
And let the ladies sing us, if they  
will,

From time to time, some ballad or a  
song  
To give us breathing-space."  
So I began,  
And the rest follow'd: and the women  
sang  
Between the rougher voices of the  
men,  
Like linnets in the pauses of the wind:  
And here I give the story and the  
songs.

## I.

A PRINCE I was, blue-eyed, and fair  
in face,  
Of temper amorous, as the first of  
May,  
With lengths of yellow ringlets, like a  
girl,  
For on my cradle shone the Northern  
star.

There lived an ancient legend in our  
house.  
Some sorcerer, whom a far-off grand-  
sire burnt  
Because he cast no shadow, had fore-  
told,  
Dying, that none of all our blood  
should know  
The shadow from the substance, and  
that one  
Should come to fight with shadows and  
to fall.  
For so, my mother said, the story ran.  
And, truly, waking dreams were, more  
or less,  
An old and strange affection of the  
house.  
Myself too had weird seizures, Heaven  
knows what:  
On a sudden in the midst of men and  
day.  
And while I walk'd and talk'd as here-  
tofore,  
I seem'd to move among a world of  
ghosts,  
And feel myself the shadow of a  
dream.  
Our great court-Galen poised his gilt-  
head cane,  
And paw'd his beard, and mutter'd  
"catalepsy."  
My mother pitying made a thousand  
prayers;  
My mother was as mild as any saint,  
Half-canonical by all that look'd on  
her,  
So gracious was her tact and tender  
ness:  
But my good father thought a king a  
king;  
He cared not for the affection of the  
house;  
He held his sceptre like a pedant's wand  
To lash offence, and with long arms  
and hands  
Reach'd out, and pick'd offenders from  
the mass  
For judgment.

Now it chanced that I had been,  
While life was yet in bud and blade,  
betroth'd

To one, a neighboring Princess: she  
to me

Was proxy-wedded with a bootless  
calf

At eight years old; and still from time  
to time

• Came murmurs of her beauty from the  
South,

And of her brethren, youths of puis-  
sance;

And still I wore her picture by my  
heart,

And one dark tress; and all around  
them both

Sweet thoughts would swarm as bees  
about their queen.

But when the days drew nigh that I  
should wed,

My father sent ambassadors with furs  
And jewels, gifts, to fetch her: these

brought back

A present, a great labor of the loom;  
And therewithal an answer vague as

wind:

Besides, they saw the king; he took  
the gifts;

He said there was a compact; that was  
true:

But then she had a will; was he to  
blame?

And maiden fancies; loved to live  
alone

Among her women; certain, would  
not wed.

That morning in the presence room  
I stood

With Cyril and with Florian, my two  
friends:

The first, a gentleman of broken  
means

(His father's fault) but given to starts  
and bursts

Of revel; and the last, my other heart,  
And almost my half-self, for still we

moved

Together, twinn'd as horse's ear and  
eye.

Now, while they spake, I saw my  
father's face

Grow long and troubled like a rising  
moon,

Inflamed with wrath; he started on  
his feet,

Tore the king's letter, snow'd it down,  
and rent

The wonder of the loom thro' warp  
and woof

From skirt to skirt; and at the last he  
swore

That he would send a hundred thou-  
sand men,

And bring her in a whirlwind; then  
he chew'd

The thrice-turn'd cud of wrath, and  
cook'd his spleen,

Communing with his captains of the  
war.

At last I spoke. "My father, let me  
go.

It cannot be but some gross error lies  
In this report, this answer of a king,  
Whom all men rate as kind and hospi-  
table:

Or, maybe, I myself, my bride once  
seen,

Whate'er my grief to find her less than  
fame,

May rue the bargain made." And Flo-  
rian said:

"I have a sister at the foreign court,  
Who moves about the Princess; she,

you know,  
Who wedded with a nobleman from

thence:

He, dying lately, left her, as I hear,  
The lady of three castles in that land:

Thro' her this matter might be sifted  
clean."

And Cyril whisper'd: "Take me with  
you too."

Then laughing "what, if these weird  
seizures come

Upon you in those lands, and no one  
near

To point you out the shadow from the  
truth!

Take me: I'll serve you better in a  
strait;

I grate on rusty hinges here:" but  
"No!"

Roar'd the rough king, "you shall not;  
we ourself

Will crush her pretty maiden fancies  
dead

In iron gauntlets: break the council  
up."

But when the council broke, I rose  
and past

Thro' the wild woods that hung about  
the town;

Found a still place, and pluck'd her  
likeness out;

Laid it on flowers, and watch'd it lying  
bathed

In the green gleam of dewy-tassell'd  
trees:

What were those fancies? wherefore  
break her troth?

Proud look'd the lips: but while I  
meditated

A wind arose and rush'd upon the  
South,

And shook the songs, the whispers,  
and the shrieks

Of the wild woods together; and a  
Voice

Went with it, "Follow, follow, thou  
shalt win."

Then, ere the silver sickle of that  
month

Became her golden shield, I stole from  
court

With Cyril and with Florian, unper-  
ceived,  
Cat-footed thro' the town and half in  
dread  
To hear my father's clamor at our  
backs  
With Ho! from some bay-window  
shake the night;  
But all was quiet: from the bastion'd  
walls  
Like threaded spiders, one by one, we  
dropt,  
And flying reach'd the frontier: then  
we crost  
To a livelier land; and so by tilth and  
grange,  
And vines, and blowing bosks of wil-  
derness,  
We gain'd the mother-city thick with  
towers,  
And in the imperial palace found the  
king.

His name was Gama; crack'd and  
small his voice,  
But bland the smile that like a wrin-  
kling wind  
On glassy water drove his cheek in  
lines;  
A little dry old man, without a star,  
Not like a king: three days he feasted  
us,  
And on the fourth I spake of why we  
came,  
And my betroth'd. "You do us,  
Prince," he said,  
Airing a snowy hand and signet gem,  
"All honor. We remember love our-  
selves  
In our sweet youth: there did a com-  
pact pass  
Long summers back, a kind of cere-  
mony —  
I think the year in which our olives  
fail'd.  
I would you had her, Prince, with all  
my heart,  
With my full heart: but there were  
widows here,  
Two widows, Lady Psyche, Lady  
Blanche;  
They fed her theories, in and out of  
place  
Maintaining that with equal husban-  
dry  
The woman were an equal to the man.  
They harp'd on this; with this our ban-  
quets rang;  
Our dances broke and buzz'd in knots  
of talk;  
Nothing but this; my very ears were  
hot  
To hear them: knowledge, so my  
daughter held,  
Was all in all: they had but been, she  
thought,  
As children; they most lose the child,  
assume  
The woman: then, Sir, awful odes she  
wrote,

Too awful, sure, for what they treated  
of,  
But all she is and does is awful; odes  
About this losing of the child; and  
rhymes  
And dismal lyrics, prophesying change  
Beyond all reason: these the women  
sang;  
And they that know such things — I  
sought but peace;  
No critic I — would call them master-  
pieces:  
They master'd me. At last she begg'd  
a boon  
A certain summer-palace which I have  
Hard by your father's frontier: I said  
no,  
Yet being an easy man, gave it: and  
there,  
All wild to found an University  
For maidens, on the spur she fled; and  
more  
We know not, — only this: they see no  
men,  
Not ev'n her brother Arac, nor the  
twins  
Her brethren, tho' they love her, look  
upon her  
As on a kind of paragon; and I  
(Pardon me saying it) were much loath  
to breed  
Dispute betwixt myself and mine; but  
since  
(And I confess with right) you think  
me bound  
In some sort, I can give you letters to  
her;  
And yet, to speak the truth, I rate your  
chance  
Almost at naked nothing."

Thus the king:  
And I, tho' nettled that he seem'd to  
slur  
With garrulous ease and oily courtesies  
Our formal compact, yet, not less (all  
frets  
But chafing me on fire to find my  
bride)  
Went forth again with both my friends.  
We rode  
Many a long league back to the North.  
At last  
From hills, that look'd across a land of  
hope,  
We dropt with evening on a rustic  
town  
Set in a gleaming river's crescent-  
curve,  
Close at the boundary of the liberties;  
There, enter'd an old hostel, call'd  
mine host  
To council, plied him with his richest  
wines  
And show'd the late-writ letters of the  
king.

He with a long low sibilation, stared  
As blank as death in marble; then ex-  
claim'd  
Averring it was clear against all rules

For any man to go : but as his brain  
Began to mellow, "If the king," he  
said,

"Had given us letters, was he bound  
to speak ?

The king would bear him out ;" and at  
the last —

The summer of the vine in all his  
veins —

"No doubt that we might make it  
worth his while.

She once had past that way ; he heard  
her speak ;

She scared him ; life ! he never saw  
the like ;

She look'd as grand as doomsday and  
as grave :

And he, he revered his liege-lady  
there ;

He always made a point to post with  
mares ;

His daughter and his housemaid were  
the boys :

The land, he understood, for miles  
about

Was till'd by women ; all the swine  
were sows,

And all the dogs " —

But while he jested thus,  
A thought flash'd thro' me which I

clothed in act,  
Remembering how we three presented

Maid  
Or Nymph, or Goddess, at high tide of

feast,  
In masque or pageant at my father's

court.  
We sent mine host to purchase female

gear ;  
He brought it, and himself, a sight to

shake  
The midriff of despair with laughter,

help  
To lace us up, till, each, in maiden

plumes  
We rustled : him we gave a costly bribe  
To guerdon silence, mounted our good

steeds,  
And boldly ventured on the liberties.

We follow'd up the river as we rode,  
And rode till midnight when the col-  
lege lights

Began to glitter firefly-like in copse  
And linden alley : then we past an

arch,  
Whereon a woman-statue rose with

wings  
From four wing'd horses dark against

the stars ;  
And some inscription ran along the

front,  
But deep in shadow : further on we

gain'd  
A little street half garden and half

house ;  
But scarce could hear each other speak

for noise  
Of clock and chimes, like silver ham-  
mers falling

On silver anvils, and the splash and  
stir

Of fountains spouted up and showering  
down

In meshes of the jasmine and the rose :  
And all about us peal'd the nightin-

gale,  
Rapt in her song, and careless of the

snare.

There stood a bust of Pallas for a  
sign,

By two sphere lamps blazon'd like  
Heaven and Earth

With constellation and with continent,  
Above an entry : riding in, we call'd ;

A plump-arm'd Ostleress and a stable  
wench

Came running at the call, and help'd  
us down.

Then stept a buxom hostess forth, and  
sail'd,

Full-blown, before us into rooms  
which gave

Upon a pillar'd porch, the bases lost  
In laurel : her we ask'd of that and

this,  
And who were tutors. "Lady Blanche"

she said,  
"And Lady Psyche." "Which was

prettiest,  
Best-natured ?" "Lady Psyche."

"Hers are we,"  
One voice, we cried ; and I sat down

and wrote,  
In such a hand as when a field of corn

Bows all its ears before the roaring  
East ;

"Three ladies of the Northern em-  
pire pray

Your Highness would enroll them with  
your own,

As Lady Psyche's pupils."

This I seal'd :  
The seal was Cupid bent above a

scroll,  
And o'er his head Uranian Venus

hung,  
And raised the blinding bandage from

his eyes :  
I gave the letter to be sent with dawn ;

And then to bed, where half in doze I  
seem'd

To float about a glimmering night, and  
watch

A full sea glazed with muffled moon-  
light, swell

On some dark shore just seen that it  
was rich.

As thro' the land at eve we went,  
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,

We fell out, my wife and I,  
O we fell out I know not why,

And kiss'd again with tears.  
And blessings on the falling out

That all the more endears,  
When we fall out with those we love

And kiss again with tears !  
 For when we came where lies the child  
 We lost in other years,  
 There above the little grave,  
 O there above the little grave,  
 We kiss'd again with tears.

## II.

At break of day the College Portress  
 came :  
 She brought us Academic silks, in hue  
 The lilac, with a silken hood to each,  
 And zoned with gold ; and now when  
 these were on,  
 And we as rich as moths from dusk  
 cocoons,  
 She, curtseying her obeisance, let us  
 know  
 The Princess Ida waited: out we paced,  
 I first, and following thro' the porch  
 that sang  
 All round with laurel, issued in a court  
 Compact with lucid marbles, boss'd  
 with lengths  
 Of classic frieze, with ample awnings  
 gay  
 Betwixt the pillars, and with great  
 urns of flowers.  
 The Muses and the Graces, group'd in  
 threes,  
 Enring'd a billowing fountain in the  
 midst ;  
 And here and there on lattice edges  
 lay  
 Or book or lute ; but hastily we past,  
 And up a flight of stairs into the hall.

There at a board by tome and paper  
 sat,  
 With two tame leopards couch'd beside  
 her throne  
 All beauty compass'd in a female form,  
 The Princess ; liker to the inhabitant  
 Of some clear planet close upon the  
 Sun,  
 Than our man's earth ; such eyes were  
 in her head,  
 And so much grace and power, breath-  
 ing down  
 From over her arch'd brows, with  
 every turn  
 Lived thro' her to the tips of her long  
 hands,  
 And to her feet. She rose her height,  
 and said :

" We give you welcome: not without  
 redound  
 Of use and glory to yourselves ye  
 come,  
 The first-fruits of the stranger : after-  
 time,  
 And that full voice which circles round  
 the grave,  
 Will rank you nobly, mingled up with  
 me.  
 What ! are the ladies of your land so  
 tall ?"  
 " We of the court," said Cyril. " From  
 the court "

She answer'd, " then ye know the  
 Prince ? " and he :  
 " The climax of his age ! as tho' there  
 were  
 One rose in all the world, your High-  
 ness that,  
 He worships your ideal " : she replied:  
 " We scarcely thought in our own hall  
 to hear  
 This barren verbiage, current among  
 men,  
 Light coin, the tinsel clink of compli-  
 ment.  
 Your flight from out your bookless  
 wilds would seem  
 As arguing love of knowledge and of  
 power ;  
 Your language proves you still the  
 child. Indeed,  
 We dream not of him : when we set  
 our hand  
 To this great work, we purposed with  
 ourself  
 Never to wed. You likewise will do  
 well,  
 Ladies, in entering here, to cast and  
 fling  
 The tricks, which make us toys of men,  
 that so,  
 Some future time, if so indeed you  
 will,  
 You may with those self-styled our  
 lords ally  
 Your fortunes, justlier balanced, scale  
 with scale."

At those high words, we conscious of  
 ourselves.  
 Perused the matting ; then an officer  
 Rose up, and read the statutes, such as  
 these :  
 Not for three years to correspond with  
 home ;  
 Not for three years to cross the liber-  
 ties ;  
 Not for three years to speak with any  
 men ;  
 And many more, which hastily sub-  
 scribed,  
 We enter'd on the boards : and " Now"  
 she cried  
 " Ye are green wood, see ye warp not.  
 Look, our hall !  
 Our statues !—not of those that men  
 desire,  
 Sleek Odaliques, or oracles of mode,  
 Nor stunted squaws of West or East ;  
 but she  
 That taught the Sabine how to rule,  
 and she  
 The foundress of the Babylonian wall,  
 The Carian Artemisia strong in war,  
 The Rhodope, that built the pyramid,  
 Clelia, Cornelia, with the Palmyrene  
 That fought Aurelian, and the Roman  
 brows  
 Of Agrippina. Dwell with these, and  
 lose  
 Conventions, since to look on noble  
 forms

Makes noble thro' the sensuous organ-  
ism  
That which is higher. O lift your na-  
tures up:  
Embrace our aims: work out your  
freedom. Girls,  
Knowledge is now no more a fountain  
seal'd:  
Drink deep, until the habits of the  
slave,  
The sins of emptiness, gossip and spite  
And slander, die. Better not be at all  
Than not be noble. Leave us: you  
may go:  
To-day the Lady Psyche will harangue  
The fresh arrivals of the week before;  
For they press in from all the prov-  
inces,  
And fill the hive."  
She spoke, and bowing waved  
Dismissal: back again we crost the  
court  
To Lady Psyche's: as we enter'd in,  
There sat along the forms, like morn-  
ing doves  
That sun their milky bosoms on the  
thatch,  
A patient range of pupils; she herself  
Erect behind a desk of satin-wood,  
A quick brunette, well-moulded, fal-  
con-eyed,  
And on the hither side, or so she  
look'd,  
Of twenty summers. At her left, a  
child,  
In shining draperies, headed like a star,  
Her maiden babe, a double April old,  
Aglaisa slept. We sat: the Lady  
glanced:  
Then Florian; but no livelier than the  
dame  
That whisper'd "Asses' ears" among  
the sedge,  
"My sister." "Comely too by all that's  
fair"  
Said Cyril. "O hush, hush!" and she  
began.  
"This world was once a fluid haze  
of light,  
Till toward the centre set the starry  
tides,  
And eddied into suns, that wheeling  
cast  
The planets: then the monster, then  
the man;  
Tattoo'd or woaded, winter-clad in  
skins,  
Raw from the prime, and crushing  
down his mate;  
As yet we find in barbarous isles, and  
here  
Among the lowest."  
Thereupon she took  
A bird's-eye-view of all the ungracious  
past;  
Glanced at the legendary Amazon  
As emblematic of a nobler age;  
Appraised the Lycian custom, spoke  
of those

That lay at wine with Lar and Lucumo;  
Ran down the Persian, Grecian, Ro-  
man lines  
Of empire, and the woman's state in  
each,  
How far from just; till warming with  
her theme  
She fulminated out her scorn of law  
Salique  
And little-footed China, touch'd on  
Mahomet  
With much contempt, and came to  
chivalry:  
When some respect, however slight,  
was paid  
To woman, superstition all awry:  
However then commenced the dawn:  
a beam  
Had slanted forward, falling in a land  
Of promise; fruit would follow. Deep,  
indeed,  
Their debt of thanks to her who first  
had dared  
To leap the rotten pales of prejudice,  
Disyoke their necks from custom, and  
assert  
None lordlier than themselves but that  
which made  
Woman and man. She had founded;  
they must build.  
Here might they learn whatever men  
were taught:  
Let them not fear: some said their  
heads were less:  
Some men's were small; not they the  
least of men;  
For often fineness compensated size:  
Besides the brain was like the hand,  
and grew  
With using; thence the man's, if more  
was more;  
He took advantage of his strength to  
be  
First in the field: some ages had been  
lost;  
But woman ripen'd earlier, and her life  
Was longer; and albeit their glorious  
names  
Were fewer, scatter'd stars, yet since  
in truth  
The highest is the measure of the man,  
And not the Kaffir, Hottentot, Malay,  
Nor those horn-handed breakers of the  
glebe,  
But Homer, Plato, Verulam; even so  
With woman: and in arts of govern-  
ment  
Elizabeth and others; arts of war  
The peasant Joan and others; arts of  
grace  
Sappho and others vied with any man:  
And, last not least, she who had left  
her place,  
And bow'd her state to them, that they  
might grow  
To use and power on this Oasis, lapt  
In the arms of leisure, sacred from the  
blight  
Of ancient influence and scorn.

At last

She rose upon a wind of prophecy  
 Dilating on the future ; " everywhere  
 Two heads in council, two beside the  
     hearth,  
 Two in the tangled business of the  
     world,  
 Two in the liberal offices of life,  
 Two plummetts dropt for one to sound  
     the abyss  
 Of science, and the secrets of the  
     mind :  
 Musician, painter, sculptor, critic,  
     more :  
 And everywhere the broad and boun-  
     teous Earth  
 Should bear a double growth of those  
     rare souls,  
 Poets, whose thoughts enrich the blood  
     of the world."

She ended here, and beckon'd us :  
     the rest  
 Parted ; and, glowing full-faced wel-  
     come she  
 Began to address us, and was moving on  
 In gratulation, till as when a boat  
 Tacks, and the slacken'd sail flaps, all  
     her voice  
 Faltering and fluttering in her throat,  
     she cried  
 " My brother ! " " Well, my sister."  
     " O " she said  
 " What do you here ? and in this dress ?  
     and these ?  
 Why who are these ? a wolf within the  
     fold !  
 A pack of wolves ! the Lord be gra-  
     cious to me !  
 A plot, a plot, a plot, to ruin all ! "  
 " No plot, no plot," he answer'd.  
     " Wretched boy,  
 How saw you not the inscription on  
     the gate,  
 LET NO MAN ENTER IN ON PAIN OF  
     DEATH ? "  
 " And if I had " he answer'd " who  
     could think  
 The softer Adams of your Academe,  
 O sister, Sirens tho' they be, were such  
 As chanted on the blanching bones of  
     men ? "  
 " But you will find it otherwise " she  
     said.  
 " You jest : ill jesting with edge-tools !  
     my vow  
 Binds me to speak, and O that iron  
     will,  
 That axelike edge unturnable, our  
     Head,  
 The Princess." " Well then, Psyche,  
     take my life,  
 And nail me like a weasel on a grange  
 For warning : bury me beside the gate,  
 And cut this epitaph above my bones ;  
*Here lies a brother by a sister slain,  
 All for the common good of womankind.*"  
 " Let me die too " said Cyril " having  
     seen  
 And heard the Lady Psyche."

I struck in :

" Albeit so mask'd, Madam, I love the  
     truth ;  
 Receive it ; and in me behold the  
     Prince  
 Your countryman, affianced years ago  
 To the Lady Ida : here, for here she  
     was,  
 And thus (what other way was left) I  
     came."  
 " O Sir, O Prince, I have no country ;  
     none ;  
 If any, this ; but none. Whate'er I  
     was  
 Disrooted, what I am is grafted here.  
 Affianced, Sir ? love-whispers may not  
     breathe  
 Within this vestal limit, and how  
     should I,  
 Who am not mine, say, live : the thun-  
     derbolt  
 Hangs silent ; but prepare : I speak ;  
     it falls."  
 " Yet pause," I said : " for that in-  
     scription there,  
 I think no more of deadly lurks  
     therein,  
 Than in a clapper clapping in a garth,  
 To scare the fowl from fruit : if more  
     there be,  
 If more and acted on, what follows ?  
     war ;  
 Your own work marr'd : for this your  
     Academe,  
 Whichever side be Victor, in the halloo  
 Will topple to the trumpet down, and  
     pass  
 With all fair theories only made to  
     gild  
 A stormless summer." " Let the Prin-  
     cess judge  
 Of that " she said : " farewell Sir—and  
     to you.  
 I shudder at the sequel, but I go."

" Are you that Lady Psyche " I  
     rejoin'd,  
 " The fifth in line from that old  
     Florian,  
 Yet hangs his portrait in my father's  
     hall  
 (The gaunt old Baron with his beetle  
     brow  
 Sun-shaded in the heat of dusty fights)  
 As he bestrode my Grandsire, when he  
     fell,  
 And all else fled : we point to it, and  
     we say,  
 The loyal warmth of Florian is not cold,  
 But branches current yet in kindred  
     veins."  
 " Are you that Psyche " Florian added  
     " she  
 With whom I sang about the morning  
     hills,  
 Flung ball, flew kite, and raced the  
     purple fly,  
 And snared the squirrel of the glen ?  
     are you  
 That Psyche, wont to bind my throbb-  
     ing brow.

To smooth my pillow, mix the foaming draught  
Of fever, tell me pleasant tales, and read  
My sickness down to happy dreams? are you  
That brother-sister Psyche, both in one?  
You were that Psyche, but what are you now?"  
"You are that Psyche," Cyril said, "for whom  
I would be that for ever which I seem,  
Woman, if I might sit beside your feet,  
And glean your scatter'd sapience."  
Then once more,  
"Are you that Lady Psyche?" I began,  
"That on her bridal morn before she past  
From all her old companions, when the king  
Kiss'd her pale cheek, declared that ancient ties  
Would still be dear beyond the southern hills;  
That were there any of our people there  
In want or peril, there was one to hear  
And help them: look! for such are these and I."  
"Are you that Psyche" Florian ask'd "to whom,  
In gentler days, your arrow-wounded fawn  
Came flying while you sat beside the well?  
The creature laid his muzzle on your lap,  
And sobb'd, and you sobb'd with it, and the blood  
Was sprinkled on your kirtle, and you wept.  
That was fawn's blood, not brother's, yet you wept.  
O by the bright head of my little niece,  
You were that Psyche, and what are you now?"  
"You are that Psyche" Cyril said again,  
"The mother of the sweetest little maid,  
That ever crow'd for kisses."  
"Out upon it!"  
She answer'd, "peace! and why should I not play  
The Spartan Mother with emotion, be  
The Lucius Junius Brutus of my kind?  
Him you call great: he for the common weal,  
The fading politics of mortal Rome,  
As I might slay this child, if good need were,  
Slew both his sons: and I, shall I, on whom  
The secular emancipation turns  
Of half this world, be swerved from right to save  
A prince, a brother? a little will I yield.  
Best so, perchance, for us, and well for you.

O hard, when love and duty clash! I fear  
My conscience will not count me fleckless; yet—  
Hear my conditions: promise (otherwise  
You perish) as you came, to slip away,  
To-day, to-morrow, soon: it shall be said,  
These women were too barbarous, would not learn;  
They fled, who might have shamed us: promise, all."

What could we else, we promised each; and she,  
Like some wild creature newly-caged, commenced  
At to-and-fro, so pacing till she paused  
By Florian; holding out her lily arms  
Took both his hands, and smiling faintly said:  
"I knew you at the first: tho' you have grown  
You scarce have alter'd: I am sad and glad  
To see you, Florian. I give thee to death  
My brother! it was duty spoke, not I.  
My needful seeming harshness, pardon it.  
Our mother, is she well?"  
With that she kiss'd  
His forehead, then, a moment after, clung  
About him, and betwixt them blossom'd up  
From out a common vein of memory  
Sweet household talk, and phrases of the hearth,  
And far allusion, till the gracious dews  
Began to glisten and to fall: and while  
They stood, so rapt, we gazing, came a voice,  
"I brought a message here from Lady Blanche."  
Back started she, and turning round we saw  
The Lady Blanche's daughter where she stood,  
Melissa, with her hand upon the lock,  
A rosy blonde, and in a college gown,  
That clad her like an April daffodilly  
(Her mother's color) with her lips apart,  
And all her thoughts as fair within her eyes,  
As bottom agates seen to wave and float  
In crystal currents of clear morning seas.  
So stood that same fair creature at the door.  
Then Lady Psyche "Ah—Melissa—you!  
You heard us?" and Melissa, "O pardon me:  
I heard, I could not help it, did not wish:  
But, dearest Lady, pray you fear me not,

Nor think I bear that heart within my  
breast,  
To give three gallant gentlemen to  
death."

"I trust you" said the other "for we  
two

Were always friends, none closer, elm  
and vine:

But yet your mother's jealous temper-  
ament—

Let not your prudence, dearest, drowse,  
or prove

The Danaïd of a leaky vase, for fear  
This whole foundation ruin, and I lose  
My honor, these their lives." "Ah,  
fear me not."

Replied Melissa "no—I would not tell,  
No, not for all Aspasia's cleverness,  
No, not to answer, Madam, all those  
hard things

That Sheba came to ask of Solomon."

"Be it so" the other "that we still  
may lead

The new light up, and culminate in  
peace,

For Solomon may come to Sheba yet."

Said Cyril "Madam, he the wisest man  
Feasted the woman wisest then, in  
halls

Of Lebanonian cedar: nor should you  
(Tho' madam you should answer, we  
would ask)

Less welcome find among us, if you  
came

Among us, debtors for our lives to you,  
Myself for something more." He said  
not what,

But "Thanks," she answer'd "go: we  
have been too long

Together: keep your hoods about the  
face;

They do so that affect abstraction here.  
Speak little; mix not with the rest;  
and hold

Your promise: all, I trust, may yet be  
well."

We turn'd to go, but Cyril took the  
child,

And held her round the knees against  
his waist, [peter,

And blew the swoll'n cheek of a trum-  
While Psyche watch'd them, smiling,  
and the child

Push'd her flat hand against his face  
and laugh'd;

And thus our conference closed.

And then we stroll'd  
For half the day thro' stately theatres

Bench'd crescent-wise. In each we sat,  
we heard

The grave Professor. On the lecture  
slate

The circle rounded under female hands  
With flawless demonstration: follow'd  
then

A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,  
With scraps of thundrous Epic lilted  
out

By violet-hooded Doctors, elegies

And quoted odes, and jewels five-  
words-long

That on the stretch'd forefinger of all  
Time

Sparkle for ever: then we dipt in all  
That treats of whatsoever is, the state,  
The total chronicles of man, the mind,  
The morals, something of the frame,  
the rock,

The star, the bird, the fish, the shell,  
the flower,

Electric, chemic laws, and all the rest,  
And whatsoever can be taught and  
known;

Till like three Horses that have broken  
fence,

And glutted all night long breast-deep  
in corn,

We issued gorged with knowledge, and  
I spoke:

"Why, Sirs, they do all this as well as  
we."

"They hunt old trails" said Cyril  
"very well;

But when did woman ever yet invent?"  
"Ungracious!" answer'd Florian,

"have you learnt  
No more from Psyche's lecture, you  
that talk'd

The trash that made me sick, and  
almost sad?"

"O trash" he said "but with a kernel  
in it.

Should I not call her wise, who made  
me wise?

And learnt? I learnt more from her  
in a flash,

Than if my brainpan were an empty  
hull,

And every Muse tumbled a science in.  
A thousand hearts lie fallow in these  
halls,

And round these halls a thousand baby  
loves

Fly twanging headless arrows at the  
hearts,

Whence follows many a vacant pang;  
but O

With me, Sir, enter'd in the bigger boy,  
The Head of all the golden-shafted firm,  
The long-limb'd lad that had a Psyche  
too;

He cleft me thro' the stomacher; and  
now

What think you of it, Florian? do I  
chase

The substance or the shadow? will it  
hold?

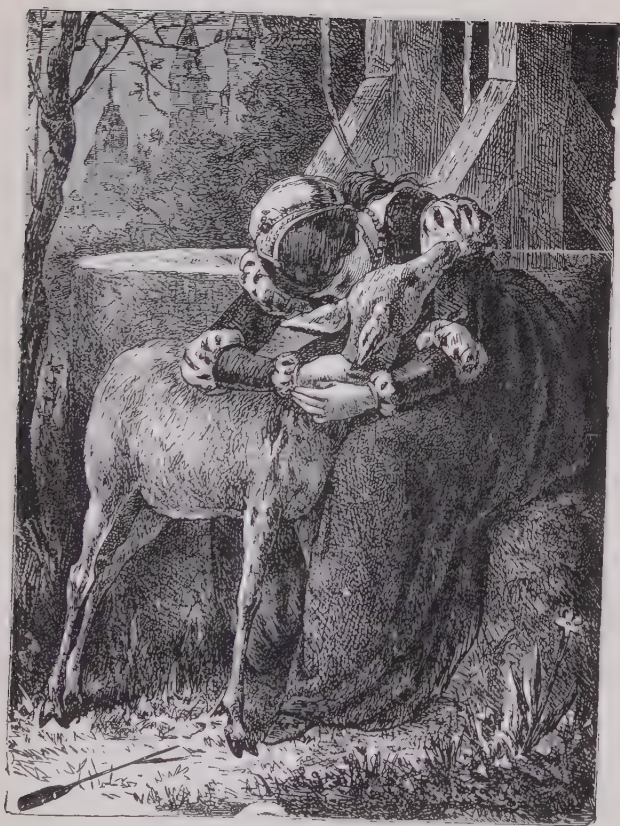
I have no sorcerer's malison on me,  
No ghostly huntings like his High-  
ness. I

Flatter myself that always everywhere  
I know the substance when I see it.  
Well,

Are castles shadows? Three of them?  
Is she

The sweet proprietress a shadow? If  
not,

Shall those three castles patch my tatter'd  
coat?





For dear are those three castles to my  
wants,

And dear is sister Psyche to my heart,  
And two dear things are one of double  
worth,

And much I might have said, but that  
my zone

Unmann'd me: then the Doctors! O  
to hear

The Doctors! O to watch the thirsty  
plants

Imbibing! once or twice I thought to  
roar,

To break my chain, to shake my mane;  
but thou,

Modulate me, Soul of mincing mim-  
icry!

Make liquid tremble of that bassoon,  
my throat;

Abase those eyes that ever loved to  
meet

Star-sisters answering under crescent  
brows;

Abate the stride, which speaks of man,  
and loose

A flying charm of blushes o'er this  
cheek,

Where they like swallows coming out  
of time

Will wonder why they came; but hark  
the bell

For dinner, let us go!"

And in we stream'd  
Among the columns, pacing staid and  
still

By twos and threes, till all from end  
to end

With beauties every shade of brown  
and fair

In colors gayer than the morning mist,  
The long hall glitter'd like a bed of  
flowers.

How might a man not wander from  
his wits

Pierced thro' with eyes, but that I  
kept mine own

Intent on her, who rapt in glorious  
dreams,

The second-sight of some Astræan age,  
Sat compass'd with professors: they,

the while,  
Discuss'd a doubt and tost it to and  
fro:

A clamor thicken'd, mixt with inmost  
terms

Of art and science: Lady Blanche  
alone

Of faded form and haughtiest linea-  
ments,

With all her autumn tresses falsely  
brown,

Shot sidelong daggers at us, a tiger-  
cat

In act to spring.

At last a solemn grace  
Concluded, and we sought the gardens:  
there

One walk'd reciting by herself, and  
one

In this hand held a volume as to read,

And smoothed a petted peacock down  
with that:

Some to a low song oar'd a shallop by,  
Or under arches of the marble bridge

Hung, shadow'd from the heat: some  
hid and sought

In the orange thickets: others tost a  
ball

Above the fountain-jets, and back  
again

With laughter: others lay about the  
lawns,

Of the older sort, and murmur'd that  
their May

Was passing: what was learning unto  
them?

They wish'd to marry; they could rule  
a house;

Men hated learned women: but we  
three

Sat muffled like the Fates; and often  
came

Melissa hitting all we saw with shafts  
Of gentle satire, kin to charity,

That harm'd not: then day droopt;  
the chapel bells

Call'd us; we left the walks; we mixt  
with those

Six hundred maidens clad in purest  
white,

Before two streams of light from wall  
to wall,

While the great organ almost burst his  
pipes,

Groaning for power, and rolling thro'  
the court

A long melodious thunder to the sound  
Of solemn psalms, and silver litanies,

The work of Ida, to call down from  
Heaven

A blessing on her labors for the world.

Sweet and low, sweet and low,

Wind of the western sea,

Low, low, breathe and blow,

Wind of the western sea!

Over the rolling waters go,

Come from the dying moon, and blow,

Blow him again to me;

While my little one, while my pretty  
one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,

Father will come to thee soon;

Rest, rest, on mother's breast,

Father will come to thee soon;

Father will come to his babe in the  
nest,

Silver sails all out of the west

Under the silver moon:

Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty  
one, sleep.

### III.

MORN in the white wake of the morn-  
ing star

Came furling all the orient into  
gold.

We rose, and each by other drest with  
care  
Descended to the courts that lay three  
parts  
In shadow, but the Muses' heads were  
touch'd  
Above the darkness from their native  
East.

There while we stood beside the  
fount, and watch'd  
Or seem'd to watch the dancing bubble,  
approach'd  
Melissa, tinged with wan from lack of  
sleep,  
Or grief, and glowing round her dewy  
eyes

The circled Iris of a night of tears ;  
"And fly" she cried, "O fly, while yet  
you may !

My mother knows : " and when I ask'd  
her " how "

" My fault " she wept " my fault ! and  
yet not mine ;

Yet mine in part. O hear me, pardon  
me.

My mother, 't is her wont from night to  
night

To rail at Lady Psyche and her side.  
She says the Princess should have been  
the Head,

Herself and Lady Psyche the two arms ;  
And so it was agreed when first they  
came ;

But Lady Psyche was the right hand  
now,

And she the left, or not, or seldom used ;  
Hers more than half the students, all  
the love.

And so last night she fell to canvass  
you :

Her countrywomen ! she did not envy  
her.

' Who ever saw such wild barbarians ?  
Girls ?— more like men ! ' and at these  
words the snake,

My secret, seem'd to stir within my  
breast ;

And oh, Sirs, could I help it, but my  
cheek

Began to burn and burn, and her lynx  
eye

To fix and make me hotter, till she  
laugh'd :

' O marvellously modest maiden, you !  
Men ! girls, like men ! why, if they  
had been men

You need not set your thoughts in ru-  
bric thus

For wholesale comment.' Pardon, I  
am shamed

That I must needs repeat for my ex-  
cuse

What looks so little graceful : ' men '  
(for still

My mother went revolving on the word)  
' And so they are,—very like men in-  
deed—

And with that woman closeted for  
hours !'

Then came these dreadful words out  
one by one,

' Why—these—are—men : ' I shud-  
der'd : ' and you know it.'

' O ask me nothing,' I said : ' And she  
knows too,

And she conceals it.' So my mother  
clutch'd

The truth at once, but with no word  
from me ;

And now thus early risen she goes to  
inform

The Princess : Lady Psyche will be  
crush'd ;

But you may yet be saved, and there-  
fore fly :

But heal me with your pardon ere you  
go."

" What pardon, sweet Melissa, for a  
blush ? "

Said Cyril : " Pale one, blush again :  
than wear

Those lilies, better blush our lives  
away.

Yet let us breathe for one hour more  
in Heaven "

He added, " lest some classic Angel  
speak

In scorn of us, ' they mounted, Gany-  
medes,

To tumble, Vulcans, on the second  
morn.'

But I will melt this marble into wax  
To yield us farther furlough : " and he  
went.

Melissa shook her doubtful curls,  
and thought

He scarce would prosper. " Tell us,"  
Florian ask'd,

" How grew this feud betwixt the right  
and left."

" O long ago," she said, " betwixt these  
two

Division smoulders hidden ; 't is my  
mother,

Too jealous, often fretful as the wind  
Pent in a crevice : much I bear with  
her :

I never knew my father, but she says  
(God help her) she was wedded to a

fool ;

And still she rail'd against the state of  
things.

She had the care of Lady Ida's youth,  
And from the Queen's decease she

brought her up.

But when your sister came she won the  
heart

Of Ida : they were still together, grew  
(For so they said themselves) inoscu-

lated ;

Consonant chords that shiver to one  
note ;

One mind in all things : yet any mother  
still

Affirms your Psyche thieved her the-  
ories.

And angled with them for her pupil's  
love:  
She calls her plagiarist; I know not  
what:  
But I must go: I dare not tarry" and  
light,  
As flies the shadow of a bird, she fled.

Then murmur'd Florian gazing after  
her.  
"An open-hearted maiden, true and  
pure.  
If I could love, why this were she:  
how pretty  
Her blushing was, and how she blush'd  
again,  
As if to close with Cyril's random wish:  
Not like your Princess cramm'd with  
erring pride,  
Nor like poor Psyche whom she drags  
in tow."

"The crane," I said, "may chatter  
of the crane,  
The dove may murmur of the dove,  
but I  
An eagle clang an eagle to the sphere.  
My princess, O my princess! true she  
errs,  
But in her own grand way: being her-  
self  
Three times more noble than three-  
score of men,  
She sees herself in every woman else,  
And so she wears her error like a crown  
To blind the truth and me: for her,  
and her,  
Hebes are they to hand ambrosia, mix  
The nectar; but—ah she—whene'er  
she moves  
The Samian Herè rises and she speaks  
A Memnon smitten with the morning  
Sun."

So saying from the court we paced,  
and gain'd  
The terrace ranged along the Northern  
front,  
And leaning there on those balusters,  
high  
Above the empurpled champaign,  
drank the gale  
That blown about the foliage under-  
neath,  
And sated with the innumerable rose,  
Beat balm upon our eyelids. Hither  
came  
Cyril, and yawning "O hard task," he  
cried;  
"No fighting shadows here! I forced  
a way  
Thro' solid opposition crabb'd and  
gnarl'd.  
Better  
to clear prime forests, heave  
and thump  
A league of street in summer solstice  
down,  
Than hammer at this reverend gentle-  
woman.

I knock'd and, bidden, enter'd; found  
her there  
At point to move, and settled in her  
eyes  
The green malignant light of coming  
storm.  
Sir, I was courteous, every phrase well-  
oil'd,  
As man's could be; yet maiden-meek  
I pray'd  
Concealment: she demanded who we  
were,  
And why we came? I fabled nothing  
fair,  
But, your example pilot, told her all.  
Up went the hush'd amaze of hand and  
eye.  
But when I dwelt upon your old affi-  
ance,  
She answer'd sharply that I talk'd  
astray.  
I urged the fierce inscription on the  
gate,  
And our three lives. True—we had  
limed ourselves  
With open eyes, and we must take the  
chance.  
But such extremes, I told her, well  
might harm  
The woman's cause, 'Not more than  
now,' she said,  
'So puddled as it is with favoritism.'  
I tried the mother's heart. Shame  
might befall  
Melissa, knowing, saying not she knew:  
Her answer was 'Leave me to deal  
with that.'  
I spoke of war to come and many  
deaths,  
And she replied, her duty was to speak,  
And duty duty, clear of consequences.  
I grew discouraged, Sir; but since I  
knew  
No rock so hard but that a little wave  
May beat admission in a thousand  
years,  
I recommenced; 'Decide not ere you  
pause.  
I find you here but in the second place,  
Some say the third—the authentic  
foundress you.  
I offer boldly: we will seat you highest:  
Wink at our advent: help my prince  
to gain  
His rightful bride, and here I promise  
you  
Some palace in our land, where you  
shall reign  
The head and heart of all our fair she-  
world,  
And your great name flow on with  
broadening time  
For ever.' Well, she balanced this a  
little,  
And told me she would answer us to-  
day,  
Meantime be mute: thus much, nor  
more I gain'd."  
He ceasing, came a message from the  
Head.

"That afternoon the Princess rode to take  
The dip of certain strata to the North.  
Would we go with her? we should find  
the land  
Worth seeing; and the river made a  
fall  
Out yonder:" then she pointed on to  
where  
A double bill ran up his furrowy forks  
Beyond the thick-leaved platans of the  
vale.

Agreed to, this, the day fled on thro'  
all  
Its range of duties to the appointed  
hour.  
Then summon'd to the porch we went.  
She stood  
Among her maidens, higher by the  
head,  
Her back against a pillar, her foot on  
one  
Of those tame leopards. Kittenlike he  
roll'd  
And paw'd about her sandal. I drew  
near;  
I gazed. On a sudden my strange seiz-  
ure came  
Upon me, the weird vision of our house:  
The Princess Ida seem'd a hollow show,  
Her gay-furr'd cats a painted fantasy,  
Her college and her maidens, empty  
masks,  
And I myself the shadow of a dream,  
For all things were and were not. Yet  
I felt  
My heart beat thick with passion and  
with awe;  
Then from my breast the involuntary  
sigh  
Brake, as she smote me with the light  
of eyes  
That lent my knee desire to kneel, and  
shook  
My pulses, till to horse we got, and so  
Went forth in long retinue following  
up  
The river as it narrow'd to the hills.

I rode beside her and to me she said:  
"O friend, we trust that you esteem'd  
us not  
Too harsh to your companion yester-  
morn;  
Unwillingly we spake." "No—not to  
her,"  
I answer'd, "but to one of whom we  
spake  
Your Highness might have seem'd the  
thing you say." "Again?" she cried, "are you ambas-  
saddresses  
From him to me? we give you, being  
strange,  
A license: speak, and let the topic  
die."

I stammer'd that I knew him—could  
have wish'd—

"Our king expects—was there no pre-  
contract?  
There is no truer-hearted—ah, you  
seem  
All he prefigured, and he could not  
see  
The bird of passage flying south but  
long'd  
To follow: surely, if your Highness  
keep  
Your purport, you will shock him ev'n  
to death,  
Or baser courses, children of despair."

"Poor boy" she said "can he not  
read—no books?  
Quoit, tennis, ball—no games? nor  
deals in that  
Which men delight in, martial exer-  
cise?  
To nurse a blind ideal like a girl,  
Methinks he seems no better than a  
girl;  
As girls were once, as we ourself  
have been:  
We had our dreams; perhaps he mixt  
with them:  
We touch on our dead self, nor shun  
to do it,  
Being other—since we learnt our mean-  
ing here,  
To lift the woman's fall'n divinity  
Upon an even pedestal with man."

She paused, and added with a haugh-  
tier smile  
"And as to precontracts, we move, my  
friend,  
At no man's beck, but know ourself  
and thee,  
O Vashti, noble Vashti! Summon'd out  
She kept her state, and left the drunk-  
en king  
To brawl at Shushan underneath the  
palms."

"Alas your Highness breathes full  
East," I said,  
"On that which leans to you. I know  
the Prince,  
I prize his truth: and then how vast a  
work  
To assail this gray pre-eminence of  
man!  
You grant me license; might I use it?  
think;  
Ere half be done perchance your life  
may fail;  
Then comes the feebler heiress of your  
plan,  
And takes and ruins all; and thus your  
pains  
May only make that footprint upon  
sand  
Which old recurring waves of preju-  
dice  
Resmooth to nothing: might I dread  
that you,  
With only Fame for spouse and your  
great deeds

For issue, yet may live in vain, and  
miss,  
Meanwhile, what every woman counts  
her due,  
Love, children, happiness?"

And she exclaim'd,  
"Peace, you young savage of the  
Northern wild!

What! tho' your Prince's love were  
like a God's,

Have we not made ourself the sacri-  
fice?

You are bold indeed : we are not talk'd  
to thus :

Yet will we say for children, would  
they grew

Like field-flowers everywhere ! we like  
them well :

But children die ; and let me tell you,  
girl,

How'er you babble, great deeds can-  
not die ;

They with the sun and moon renew  
their light

Forever, blessing those that look on  
them.

Children — that men may pluck them  
from our hearts,

Kill us with pity, break us with our-  
selves—

○ — children — there is nothing upon  
earth

More miserable than she that has a son  
And sees him err : nor would we work  
for fame ;

Tho' she perhaps might reap the ap-  
plause of Great,

Who learns the one *POU STO* whence  
after-hands

May move the world, tho' she herself  
effect

But little : wherefore up and act, nor  
shrink

For fear our solid aim be dissipated  
By frail successors. Would, indeed,

we had been,

In lieu of many mortal flies, a race  
Of giants living, each, a thousand

years,

That we might see our own work out,  
and watch

The sandy footprint harden into  
stone."

I answer'd nothing, doubtful in my-  
self

If that strange Poet-princess with her  
grand

Imaginations might at all be won.

And she broke out interpreting my  
thoughts :

"No doubt we seem a kind of mon-  
ster to you ;

We are used to that : for women, up  
till this

Cramp'd under worse than South-sea-  
isle taboo,

Dwarfs of the gynæceum, fail so far  
In high desire, they know not, cannot

guess

How much their welfare is a passion  
to us.

If we could give them surer, quicker  
proof—

Oh if our end were less achievable  
By slow approaches, than by single act

Of immolation, any phase of death,  
We were as prompt to spring against

the pikes,  
Or down the fiery gulf as talk of it,

To compass our dear sisters' liberties."

She bow'd as if to veil a noble tear ;  
And up we came to where the river

sloped.

To plunge in cataract, shattering on  
black blocks

A breadth of thunder. O'er it shook  
the woods,

And danced the color, and, below,  
stuck out

The bones of some vast bulk that lived  
and roar'd

Before man was. She gazed awhile  
and said,

"As these rude bones to us, are we to her  
That will be." "Dare we dream of

that," I ask'd,

"Which wrought us, as the workman  
and his work,

That practice betters?" "How," she  
cried, "you love

The metaphysics ! read and earn our  
prize,

A golden brooch : beneath an emerald  
plane

Sits Diotima, teaching him that died  
Of hemlock ; our device ; wrought to

the life ;

She rapt upon her subject, he on her :

For there are schools for all." "And  
yet" I said

"Methinks I have not found among  
them all

One atomie." "Nay, we thought of  
that,"

She answer'd, "but it pleased us not :

in truth

We shudder but to dream our maids  
should ape

Those monstrous males that carve the  
living hound,

And cram him with the fragments of  
the grave,

Or in the dark dissolving human heart,  
And holy secrets of this microcosm,

Dabbling a shameless hand with  
shameful jest,

Encarnalize their spirits : yet we know  
Knowledge is knowledge, and this mat-  
ter hangs :

Howbeit ourself, forseeing casualty,  
Nor willing men should come among

us, learnt,

For many weary moons before we  
came,

This craft of healing. Were you sick,  
ourselves

Would tend upon you. To your ques-  
tion now,

Which touches on the workman and  
his work.

Let there be light and there was light :  
't is so :

For was, and is, and will be, are but is ;  
And all creation is one act at once,  
The birth of light : but we that are not  
all,

As parts, can see but parts, now this,  
now that,

And live, perforce, from thought to  
thought, and make

One act a phantom of succession : thus  
Our weakness somehow shapes the  
shadow, Time ;

But in the shadow will we work, and  
mould

The woman to the fuller day."

She spake  
With kindled eyes : we rode a league  
beyond,

And, o'er a bridge of pinewood cross-  
ing, came

On flowery levels underneath the crag,  
Full of all beauty. "O how sweet" I  
said

(For I was half-oblivious of my mask)  
"To linger here with one that loved  
us," "Yea"

She answer'd "or with fair philos-  
ophies

That lift the fancy ; for indeed these  
fields

Are lovely, lovelier not the Elysian  
lawns,

Where paced the Demigods of old, and  
saw

The soft white vapor streak the crown-  
ed towers

Built to the Sun : "then, turning to  
her maids,

"Pitch our pavilion here upon the  
sward ;

Lay out the viands." At the word,  
they raised

A tent of satin, elaborately wrought  
With fair Corinna's triumph ; here she  
stood,

Engirt with many a florid maiden-  
cheek,

The woman - conqueror ; woman - con-  
quer'd there

The bearded Victor of ten-thousand  
hymns,

And all the men mourn'd at his side :  
but we

Set forth to climb ; then, climbing,  
Cyril kept

With Psyche, with Melissa Florian, I  
With mine affianced. Many a little  
hand

Glanced like a touch of sunshine on  
the rocks,

Many a light foot shone like a jewel set  
In the dark crag : and then we turn'd,  
we wound

About the cliffs, the copses, out and in,  
Hammering and clinking, chattering  
stony names

Of shale and hornblende, rag and trap  
and tuff,

Amygdaloid and trachyte, till the Sun  
Grew broader toward his death and

fell, and all  
The rosy heights came out above the  
lawns.

The splendor falls on castle walls

And snowy summits old in story :  
The long light shakes across the lakes,

And the wild cataract leaps in glory.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes  
flying,

Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying,  
dying, dying.

O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear,  
And thinner, clearer, farther going !

O sweet and far from cliff and scar  
The horns of Elfland faintly blow-  
ing !

Blow, let us hear the purple glens re-  
plying :

Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying,  
dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,  
They faint on hill or field or river :

Our echoes roll from soul to soul,  
And grow for ever and for ever.

Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes  
flying,

And answer, echoes, answer, dying,  
dying, dying.

#### IV.

"THERE sinks the nebulous star we  
call the Sun,

If that hypothesis of theirs be sound"  
Said Ida ; "let us down and rest ;"

and we  
Down from the lean and wrinkled pre-  
cipices,

By every coppice-feather'd chasm and  
cleft,

Dropt thro' the ambrosial gloom to  
where below

No bigger than a glow-worm shone the  
tent

Lamp-lit from the inner. Once she  
lean'd on me,

Descending ; once or twice she lent her  
hand,

And blissful palpitations in the blood,  
Stirring a sudden transport rose and  
fell.

But when we planted level feet and  
dipt

Beneath the satin dome and enter'd in,  
There leaning deep in broider'd down

we sank  
Our elbows : on a tripod in the midst  
A fragrant flame rose, and before us

glow'd  
Fruit, blossom, viand, amber wine, and  
gold.

Then she "Let some one sing to us :  
lightlier move

The minutes fledged with music : " and  
a maid,  
Of those beside her, smote her harp,  
and sang.

"Tears, idle tears, I know not what  
they mean,  
Tears from the depth of some divine  
despair  
Rise in the heart, and gather to the  
eyes,  
In looking on the happy Autumn-  
fields,  
And thinking of the days that are no  
more.

"Fresh as the first beam glittering  
on a sail,  
That brings our friends up from the  
underworld,  
Sad as the last which reddens over one  
That sinks with all we love below the  
verge;  
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no  
more.

"Ah, sad and strange as in dark sum-  
mer dawns  
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd  
birds  
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes  
The casement slowly grows a glimmer-  
ing square;  
So sad, so strange, the days that are  
no more.

"Dear as remember'd kisses after  
death,  
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy  
feign'd  
On lips that are for others; deep as  
love,  
Deep as first love, and wild with all  
regret;  
O Death in Life, the days that are no  
more."

She ended with such passion that the  
tear,  
She sang of, shook and fell, an erring  
pearl  
Lost in her bosom : but with some dis-  
dain  
Answer'd the Princess "If indeed  
there haunt  
About the moulder'd lodges of the Past  
So sweet a voice and vague, fatal to  
men,  
Well needs it we should cram our ears  
with wool  
And so pace by : but thine are fancies  
hatch'd  
In silken-folded idleness ; nor is it  
Wiser to weep a tri e occasion lost,  
But trim our sails, and let old by-gones  
be,  
While down the streams that float us  
each and all  
To the issue, goes, like glittering bergs  
of ice,

Throne after throne, and molten on  
the waste  
Becomes a cloud : for all things serve  
their time  
Toward that great year of equal might  
and rights,  
Nor would I fight with iron laws, in  
the end  
Found golden : let the past be past ;  
let be  
Their cancell'd Babels : tho' the rough  
kex break  
The starr'd mosaic, and the beard-  
blown goat  
Hang on the shaft, and the wild fig-  
tree split  
Their monstrous idols, care not while  
we hear  
A trumpet in the distance pealing  
news  
Of better, and Hope, a poisoning eagle,  
burns  
Above the unrisen morrow : " then to  
me ;  
"Know you no song of your own land,"  
she said,  
"Not such as moans about the retro-  
spect,  
But deals with the other distance and  
the hues  
Of promise ; not a death's-head at the  
wine."

Then I remember'd one myself had  
made,  
What time I watch'd the swallow  
winging south  
From mine own land, part made long  
since, and part  
Now while I sang, and maidenlike as  
far  
As I could ape their treble, did I sing.

"O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying  
South,  
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded  
eaves,  
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to  
thee.

"O tell her, Swallow, thou that  
knowest each,  
That bright and fierce and fickle is the  
South,  
And dark and true and tender is the  
North.

"O Swallow, Swallow, if I could  
follow, and light  
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and  
trill,  
And cheep and twitter twenty million  
loves.

"O were I thou that she might take  
me in,  
And lay me on her bosom, and her  
heart  
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.

"Why lingereth she to clothe her  
heart with love.

Delaying as the tender ash delays  
To clothe herself, when all the woods  
are green?

"O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood  
is flown:  
Say to her, I do but wanton in the  
South,  
But in the North long since my nest is  
made

"O tell her, brief is life but love is  
long,  
And brief the sun of summer in the  
North,  
And brief the moon of beauty in the  
South.

"O Swallow, flying from the golden  
woods,  
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and  
make her mine,  
And tell her, tell her, that I follow  
thee."

I ceased, and all the ladies, each at  
each,  
Like the Ithacensian suitors in old  
time,  
Stared with great eyes, and laugh'd  
with alien lips,  
And knew not what they meant; for  
still my voice

Rang false; but smiling "Not for  
thee," she said,  
"O Bulbul, any rose of Gulistan  
Shall burst her veil: marsh-divers,  
rather, maid,  
Shall croak thee sister, or the meadow-  
crake

Grate her harsh kindred in the grass:  
and this

A mere love-poem! O for such, my  
friend,

We hold them slight: they mind us of  
the time

When we made bricks in Egypt.  
Knaves are men,

That lute and flute fantastic tender-  
ness,

And dress the victim to the offering up.  
And paint the gates of Hell with Par-  
adise,

And play the slave to gain the tyranny.  
Poor soul! I had a maid of honor once:  
She wept her true eyes blind for such  
a one.

A rogue of canzonets and serenades.  
I loved her. Peace be with her. She  
is dead.

So they blaspheme the muse! but  
great is song

Used to great ends: ourself have often  
tried

Valkyrian hymns, or into rhythm have  
dash'd

The passion of the prophetess; for  
song

Is drier unto freedom, force and growth  
Of spirit than to junketing and love.

Love is it? Would this same mock-  
love, and this

Mock-Hymen were laid up like winter  
bats,

Till all men grew to rate us at our  
worth,

Not vassals to be beat, nor petty babes  
To be dandled, no, but living wills,  
and sphered

Whole in ourselves and owed to none.  
Enough!

But not to leaven play with profit,  
you,

Know your no song, the true growth of  
your soil,

That gives the manners of your coun-  
trywomen?"

She spoke and turn'd her sumptuous  
head with eyes

Of shining expectation fixt on mine.  
Then while I dragg'd my brains for  
such a song,

Cyril, with whom the bell-mouth'd  
glass had wrought,

Or master'd by the sense of sport, be-  
gan

To troll a careless, careless tavern-  
catch

Of Moll and Meg, and strange experi-  
ences

Unmeet for ladies. Florian nodded at  
him,

I frowning; Psyche flush'd and wann'd  
and shook;

The lilylike Melissa droop'd her brows;  
"Forbear" the Princess cried; "For-  
bear, Sir" I;

And heated thro' and thro' with wrath  
and love,

I smote him on the breast; he started  
up;

There rose a shriek as of a city sack'd;  
Melissa clamor'd "Flee the death;"

"To horse"

Said Ida; "home! to horse!" and  
fled, as flies

A troop of snowy doves athwart the  
dusk,

When some one batters at the dove-  
cote doors,

Disorderly the women. Alone I stood  
With Florian, cursing Cyril, vext at  
heart,

In the pavilion: there like parting  
hopes

I heard them passing from me: hoof  
by hoof,

And every hoof a knell to my desires,  
Clang'd on the bridge; and then au-

other shriek,

"The Head, the Head, the Princess, O  
the Head!"

For blind with rage she miss'd the  
plank, and roll'd

In the river. Out I sprang from glow  
to gloom:

There whirl'd her white robe like a  
blossom'd branch

Rapt to the horrible fall: a glance I  
gave,

No more; but woman-vested as I was

Plunged; and the flood drew; yet I  
 caught her; then  
 Oaring one arm, and bearing in my left  
 The weight of all the hopes of half the  
 world,  
 Strove to buffet to land in vain. A  
 tree  
 Was half-disrooted from his place and  
 stoop'd  
 To drench his dark locks in the gurg-  
 ling wave  
 Mid-channel. Right on this we drove  
 and caught,  
 And grasping down the boughs I gain'd  
 the shore.

There stood her maidens glimmer-  
 ingly group'd  
 In the hollow bank. One reaching for-  
 ward drew  
 My burden from mine arms; they cried  
 "she lives:"  
 They bore her back into the tent: but I,  
 So much a kind of shame within me  
 wrought,  
 Not yet endured to meet her opening  
 eyes,  
 Nor found my friends; but push'd  
 alone on foot  
 (For since her horse was lost I left her  
 mine)  
 Across the woods, and less from In-  
 dian craft  
 Than beelike instinct hiveward, found  
 at length  
 The garden portals. Two great statues,  
 Art  
 And Science, Caryatids, lifted up  
 A weight of emblem, and betwixt were  
 valves  
 Of open-work in which the hunter rued  
 His rash intrusion, maillike, but his  
 brows  
 Had sprouted, and the branches there-  
 upon  
 Spread out at top, and grimly spiked  
 the gates.

A little space was left between the  
 horns,  
 Thro' which I clamber'd o'er at top  
 with pain,  
 Drept on the sward, and up the linden  
 walks,  
 And, tost on thoughts that changed  
 from hue to hue,  
 Now poring on the glowworm, now the  
 star,  
 I paced the terrace, till the Bear had  
 wheel'd  
 Thro' a great arc his seven slow suns.  
 A step  
 Of lightest echo, then a loftier form  
 Than female, moving thro' the uncer-  
 tain gloom,  
 Disturb'd me with the doubt "if this  
 were she"  
 But it was Florian. "Hist O Hist," he  
 said,

"They seek us: out so late is out of  
 rites.  
 Moreover 'seize the strangers' is the  
 cry.  
 How came you here?" I told him:  
 "I" said he,  
 "Last of the train, a moral leper, I,  
 To whom none spake, half-sick at  
 heart, return'd.  
 Arriving all confused among the rest  
 With hooded brows I crept into the  
 hall,  
 And, couch'd behind a Judith, under-  
 neath  
 The head of Holofernes peep'd and saw.  
 Girl after girl was call'd to trial: each  
 Disclaim'd all knowledge of us: last  
 of all,  
 Melissa: trust me, Sir, I pitied her.  
 She, question'd if she knew us men,  
 at first  
 Was silent; closer prest, denied it not:  
 And then, demanded if her mother  
 knew,  
 Or Psyche, she affirm'd not, or denied:  
 From whence the Royal mind, familiar  
 with her,  
 Easily gather'd either guilt. She sent  
 For Psyche, but she was not there; she  
 call'd  
 For Psyche's child to cast it from the  
 doors;  
 She sent for Blanche to accuse her  
 face to face;  
 And I slept out: but whither will you  
 now?  
 And where are Psyche, Cyril? both are  
 fled:  
 What, if together? that were not so  
 well.  
 Would rather we had never come! I  
 dread  
 His wildness, and the chances of the  
 dark."

"And yet," I said, "you wrong him  
 more than I  
 That struck him: this is proper to the  
 clown,  
 Tho' smock'd, or furr'd and purpled,  
 still the clown.  
 To harm the thing that trusts him, and  
 to shame  
 That which he says he loves: for Cyril,  
 how'er  
 He deal in frolic, as to-night—the song  
 Might have been worse and sinn'd in  
 grosser lips  
 Beyond all pardon—as it is, I hold  
 These flashes on the surface are not he.  
 He has a solid base of temperament:  
 But as the waterlily starts and slides  
 Upon the level in little puffs of wind  
 Tho' anchor'd to the bottom, such is  
 he."

Scarce had I ceased when from a  
 tamarisk near  
 Two Proctors leapt upon us, crying,  
 "Names:"

He, standing still, was clutch'd; but I  
 began  
 To thrud the musky-circled mazes,  
 wind  
 And double in and out the boles, and  
 race  
 By all the fountains: fleet I was of  
 foot:  
 Before me shower'd the rose in flakes;  
 behind  
 I heard the puff'd pursuer; at mine  
 ear  
 Bubbled the nightingale and heeded  
 not,  
 And secret laughter tickled all my soul.  
 At last I hook'd my ankle in a vine,  
 That clasp'd the feet of a Mnemosyne,  
 And falling on my face was caught and  
 known.

They haled us to the Princess where  
 she sat  
 High in the hall: above her droop'd a  
 lamp,  
 And made the single jewel on her brow  
 Burn like the mystic fire on a mast-  
 head,  
 Prophet of storm: a handmaid on each  
 side  
 Bow'd toward her, combing out her  
 long black hair  
 Damp from the river; and close be-  
 hind her stood  
 Eight daughters of the plough, stronger  
 than men,  
 Huge women blowz'd with health, and  
 wind, and rain,  
 And labor. Each was like a Druid  
 rock;  
 Or like a spire of land that stands apart  
 Cleft from the main, and wall'd about  
 with mews.

Then, as we came, the crowd divid-  
 ing clove  
 An advent to the throne: and there  
 beside,  
 Half-naked as if caught at once from  
 bed  
 And tumbled on the purple footcloth,  
 lay  
 The lily-shining child; and on the left,  
 Bow'd on her palms and folded up  
 from wrong,  
 Her round white shoulder shaken with  
 her sobs.  
 Melissa knelt; but Lady Blanche erect  
 Stood up and spake, an affluent orator.

"It was not thus, O Princess, in old  
 days:  
 You prized my counsel, lived upon my  
 lips:  
 I led you then to all the Castalies;  
 I fed you with the milk of every Muse;  
 I loved you like this kneeler, and you  
 me  
 Your second mother: those were gra-  
 cious times.  
 Then came your new friend: you be-  
 gan to change—

I saw it and grieved—to slacken and  
 cool;  
 Till taken with her seeming openness  
 You turn'd your warmer currents all  
 to her,  
 To me you froze: this was my meed  
 for all.  
 Yet I bore up in part from ancient love,  
 And partly that I hoped to win you  
 back,  
 And partly conscious of my own deserts,  
 And partly that you were my civil head,  
 And chiefly you were born for some-  
 thing great,  
 In which I might your fellow-worker  
 be,  
 When time should serve; and thus a  
 noble scheme  
 Grew up from seed we two long since  
 had sown;  
 In us true growth, in her a Jonah's  
 gourd,  
 Up in one night and due to sudden sun:  
 We took this palace; but even from  
 the first  
 You stood in your own light and dark-  
 en'd mine.  
 What student came but that you planed  
 her path  
 To Lady Psyche, younger, not so wise,  
 A foreigner, and I your countrywoman,  
 I your old friend and tried, she new in  
 all?  
 But still her lists were swell'd and mine  
 were lean;  
 Yet I bore up in hope she would be  
 known:  
 Then came these wolves: they knew  
 her: they endured,  
 Long-closeted with her the yestermorn,  
 To tell her what they were, and she to  
 hear:  
 And me none told: not less to an eye  
 like mine,  
 A lidless watcher of the public weal,  
 Last night, their mask was patent, and  
 my foot  
 Was to you: but I thought again: I  
 fear'd  
 To meet a cold 'We thank you, we shall  
 hear of it  
 From Lady Psyche: you had gone to  
 her,  
 She told, perforce; and winning easy  
 grace,  
 No doubt, for slight delay, remain'd  
 among us  
 In our young nursery still unknown,  
 the stem  
 Less grain than touchwood, while my  
 honest heat  
 Were all miscounted as malignant  
 haste  
 To push my rival out of place and  
 power.  
 But public use required she should be  
 known;  
 And since my oath was ta'en for public  
 use,  
 I broke the letter of it to keep the sense—

I spoke not then at first, but watch'd  
 them well,  
 Saw that they kept apart, no mischief  
 done;  
 And yet this day (tho' you should hate  
 me for it)  
 I came to tell you; found that you had  
 gone,  
 Ridd'n to the hills, she likewise: now,  
 I thought,  
 That surely she will speak; if not,  
 then I:  
 Did she? These monsters blazon'd  
 what they were,  
 According to the coarseness of their  
 kind,  
 For thus I hear; and known at last  
 (my work)  
 And full of cowardice and guilty  
 shame,  
 I grant in her some sense of shame,  
 she flies;  
 And I remain on whom to wreak your  
 rage,  
 I, that have lent my life to build up  
 yours,  
 I that have wasted here health, wealth,  
 and time,  
 And talents, I—you know it—I will  
 not boast:  
 Dismiss me, and I prophesy your plan,  
 Divorced from my experience, will be  
 chaff  
 For every gust of chance, and men will  
 say  
 We did not know the real light, but  
 chased  
 The wisp that flickers where no foot  
 can tread."

She ceased: the Princess answer'd  
 coldly "Good:  
 Your oath is broken: we dismiss you:  
 go.  
 For this lost lamb (she pointed to the  
 child)  
 Our mind is changed: we take it to  
 ourself."

Thereat the Lady stretch'd a vulture  
 throat,  
 And shot from crooked lips a haggard  
 smile.  
 "The plan was mine. I built the nest"  
 she said  
 "To hatch the cuckoo. Rise!" and  
 stoop'd to updrag  
 Melissa: she, half on her mother  
 propt,  
 Half-drooping from her, turn'd her  
 face, and cast  
 A liquid look on Ida, full of prayer,  
 Which melted Florian's fancy as she  
 hung,  
 A Niobëan daughter, one arm out,  
 Appealing to the bolts of Heaven; and  
 while  
 We gazed upon her came a little stir  
 About the doors, and on a sudden  
 rush'd

Among us, out of breath, as one pur-  
 sued,  
 A woman-post in flying raiment. Fear  
 Stared in her eyes, and chalk'd her  
 face, and wing'd  
 Her transit to the throne, whereby she  
 fell  
 Delivering seal'd despatches which the  
 Head  
 Took half-amazed, and in her lion's  
 mood  
 Tore open, silent we with blind sur-  
 mise  
 Regarding, while she read, till over  
 brow  
 And cheek and bosom brake the wrath-  
 ful bloom  
 As of some fire against a stormy cloud,  
 When the wild peasant rights himself,  
 the rick  
 Flames, and his anger reddens in the  
 heavens;  
 For anger most it seem'd, while now  
 her breast,  
 Beaten with some great passion at her  
 heart,  
 Palpitated, her hand shook, and we  
 heard  
 In the dead hush the papers that she  
 held  
 Rustle: at once the lost lamb at her  
 feet  
 Sent out a bitter bleating for its dam;  
 The plaintive cry jarr'd on her ire;  
 she crush'd  
 The scrolls together, made a sudden  
 turn  
 As if to speak, but, utterance failing  
 her,  
 She whirl'd them on to me, as who  
 should say  
 "Read," and I read—two letters—one  
 her sire's.

"Fair daughter, when we sent the  
 Prince your way  
 We knew not your ungracious laws,  
 which learnt,  
 We, conscious of what temper you are  
 built,  
 Came all in haste to hinder wrong, but  
 fell  
 Into his father's hands, who has this  
 night,  
 You lying close upon his territory,  
 Slipt round and in the dark invested  
 you,  
 And here he keeps me hostage for his  
 son."

The second was my father's running  
 thus:  
 "You have our son: touch not a hair  
 of his head:  
 Render him up unscathed: give him  
 your hand:  
 Cleave to your contract: tho' indeed  
 we hear  
 You hold the woman is the better man;  
 A rampant heresy, such as if it spread

Would make all women kick against  
 their Lords  
 Thro' all the world, and which might  
 well deserve  
 That we this night should pluck your  
 palace down;  
 And we will do it, unless you send us  
 back  
 Our son, on the instant, whole."  
 So far I read;  
 And then stood up and spoke impet-  
 uously.

"O not to pry and peer on your re-  
 serve,  
 But led by golden wishes, and a hope  
 The child of regal compact, did I break  
 Your precinct; not a scorner of your  
 sex  
 But venerator, zealous it should be  
 All that it might be: hear me, for I  
 bear,  
 Tho' man, yet human, whatsoe'er your  
 wrongs,  
 From the flaxen curl to the gray lock a  
 life  
 Less mine than yours: my nurse would  
 tell me of you;  
 I babbled for you, as babies for the  
 moon,  
 Vague brightness; when a boy, you  
 stoop'd to me  
 From all high places, lived in all fair  
 lights,  
 Came in long breezes rapt from inmost  
 south  
 And blown to inmost north; at eve and  
 dawn  
 With Ida, Ida, rang the woods;  
 The leader wildswan in among the  
 stars  
 Would clang it, and lapt in wreaths of  
 glowworm light  
 The mellow breaker murmur'd Ida.  
 Now,  
 Because I would have reach'd you,  
 had you been  
 Sphered up with Cassiopæia, or the en-  
 throned  
 Persephone in Hades, now at length,  
 Those winters of abeyance all worn  
 out,  
 A man I came to see you: but, indeed,  
 Not in this frequency can I lend full  
 tongue,  
 O noble Ida, to those thoughts that  
 wait  
 On you, their centre: let me say but  
 this,  
 That many a famous man and woman,  
 town  
 And landskip, have I heard of, after  
 seen  
 The dwarfs of presage; tho' when  
 known, there grew  
 Another kind of beauty in detail  
 Made them worth knowing: but in you  
 I found  
 My boyish dream involved and dazzled  
 down

And master'd, while that after-beauty  
 makes  
 Such head from act to act, from hour  
 to hour,  
 Within me, that except you slay me  
 here,  
 According to your bitter statute-book,  
 I cannot cease to follow you, as they  
 say  
 The seal does music; who desire you  
 more  
 Than growing boys their manhood;  
 dying lips,  
 With many thousand matters left to  
 do,  
 The breath of life; O more than poor  
 men wealth,  
 Than sick men health—yours, yours,  
 not mine—but half  
 Without you; with you, whole; and of  
 those halves  
 You worthiest; and howe'er you block  
 and bar  
 Your heart with system out from mine,  
 I hold  
 That it becomes no man to nurse de-  
 spair,  
 But in the teeth of clench'd antagon-  
 isms  
 To follow up the worthiest till he die.  
 Yet that I came not all unauthorized  
 Behold your father's letter."

On one knee  
 Kneeling, I gave it, which she caught,  
 and dash'd  
 Unopen'd at her feet: a tide of fierce  
 invective seem'd to wait behind her  
 lips,  
 As waits a river level with the dam  
 Ready to burst and flood the world  
 with foam:  
 And so she would have spoken, but  
 there rose  
 A hubbub in the court of half the  
 maids  
 Gather'd together: from the illumined  
 hall  
 Long lanes of splendor slanted o'er a  
 press  
 Of snowy shoulders, thick as herded  
 ewes,  
 And rainbow robes, and gems and gem-  
 like eyes,  
 And gold and golden heads; they to  
 and fro  
 Fluctuated, as flowers in storm, some  
 red, some pale,  
 All open-mouth'd, all gazing to the  
 light,  
 Some crying there was an army in the  
 land,  
 And some that men were in the very  
 walls,  
 And some they cared not; till a clamor  
 grew  
 As of a new-world Babel, woman-built,  
 And worse-confounded: high above  
 them stood  
 The placid marble Muses, looking  
 peace.

Not peace she look'd, the Head : but  
 rising up  
 Robed in the long night of her deep  
 hair, so  
 To the open window moved, remaining  
 there  
 Fixt like a beacon-tower above the  
 waves  
 Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling  
 eye  
 Glares ruin, and the wild birds on the  
 light  
 Dash themselves dead. She stretch'd  
 her arms and call'd  
 Across the tumult and the tumult fell.

"What fear ye brawlers? am not I  
 your Head?  
 On me, me, me, the storm first breaks:  
 I dare  
 All these male thunderbolts: what is  
 it ye fear?  
 Peace! there are those to avenge us  
 and they come:  
 If not,—myself were like enough, O  
 girls,  
 To unfurl the maiden banner of our  
 rights.  
 And clad in iron burst the ranks of  
 war,  
 Or, falling, protomartyr of our cause,  
 Die: yet I blame you not so much for  
 fear;  
 Six thousand years of fear have made  
 you that  
 From which I would redeem you; but  
 for those  
 That stir this hubbub—you and you—I  
 know  
 Your faces there in the crowd—to-  
 morrow morn  
 We hold a great convention: then shall  
 they  
 That love their voices more than duty,  
 learn  
 With whom they deal, dismiss'd in  
 shame to live  
 No wiser than their mothers, house-  
 hold stuff,  
 Live chattels, mincers of each other's  
 fame,  
 Full of weak poison, turnspits for the  
 clown,  
 The drunkard's football, laughing-  
 stocks of Time,  
 Whose brains are in their hands and  
 in their heels,  
 But fit to flaunt, to dress, to dance, to  
 thrum,  
 To tramp, to scream, to burnish, and  
 to scour,  
 For ever slaves at home and fools  
 abroad."

She, ending, waved her hands: there-  
 at the crowd  
 Muttering, dissolved: then with a  
 smile, that look'd  
 A stroke of cruel sunshine on the cliff,

When all the glens are drown'd in  
 azure gloom  
 Of thunder-shower, she floated to us  
 and said:

"You have done well and like a  
 gentleman,  
 And like a prince: you have our  
 thanks for all:  
 And you look well too in your woman's  
 dress:  
 Well have you done and like a gentle  
 man.  
 You saved our life: we owe you bitter  
 thanks:  
 Better have died and spilt our bones in  
 the flood—  
 Then men had said—but now—What  
 hinders me  
 To take such bloody vengeance on you  
 both?—  
 Yet since our father—Wasps in our  
 good hive,  
 You would-be quenchers of the light  
 to be,  
 Barbarians, grosser than your native  
 bears—  
 O would I had his sceptre for one  
 hour!  
 You that have dared to break our  
 bound, and gull'd  
 Our servants, wrong'd and lied and  
 thwarted us—  
 I wed with thee! I bound by precon-  
 tract  
 Your bride, your bonds slave! not tho'  
 all the gold  
 That veins the world were pack'd to  
 make your crown,  
 And every spoken tongue should lord  
 you. Sir,  
 Your falsehood and yourself are hate-  
 ful to us:  
 I trample on your offers and on you:  
 Begone: we will not look upon you  
 more.  
 Here, push them out at gates."  
 In wrath she spake.  
 Then those eight mighty daughters of  
 the plough  
 Bent their broad faces toward us and  
 address'd  
 Their motion: twice I sought to plead  
 my cause,  
 But on my shoulder hung their heavy  
 hands,  
 The weight of destiny: so from her face  
 They push'd us, down the steps, and  
 thro' the court,  
 And with grim laughter thrust us out  
 at gates.

We cross'd the street and gain'd a  
 petty mound  
 Beyond it, whence we saw the lights  
 and heard  
 The voices murmuring. While I list-  
 en'd, came  
 On a sudden the weird seizure and the  
 doubt:

I seem'd to move among a world of  
ghosts ;  
The Princess with her monstrous wo-  
man-guard,  
The jest and earnest working side by  
side,  
The cataract and the tumult and the  
kings  
Were shadows ; and the long fantastic  
night  
With all its doings had and had not  
been,  
And all things were and were not.  
This went by  
As strangely as it came, and on my  
spirits  
Settled a gentle cloud of melancholy ;  
Not long ; I shook it off ; for spite of  
doubts  
And sudden ghostly shadowings I was  
one  
To whom the touch of all mischance  
but came  
As night to him that sitting on a hill  
Sees the midsummer, midnight, Nor-  
way sun  
Set into sunrise : then we moved away.

Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums,  
That beat to battle where he stands ;  
Thy face across his fancy comes,  
And gives the battle to his hands :  
A moment, while the trumpets blow,  
He sees his brood about thy knee ;  
The next, like fire he meets the foe,  
And strikes him dead for thine and  
thee.

So Lilia sang : we thought her half-  
possess'd,  
She struck such warbling fury thro' the  
words ;  
And, after, feigning pique at what she  
call'd  
The raillery, or grotesque, or false sub-  
blime—  
Like one that wishes at a dance to  
change  
The music—clapt her hands and cried  
for war,  
Or some grand fight to kill and make  
an end :

And he that next inherited the tale  
Half turning to the broken statue, said,  
" Sir Ralph has got your colors : if I  
prove  
Your knight, and fight your battle  
what for me ? "  
It chanced, her empty glove upon the  
tomb  
Lay by her like a model of her hand.  
She took it and she flung it. " Fight "  
she said,  
" And make us all we would be, great  
and good."  
He knightlike in his cap instead of  
casque,  
A cap of Tyrol borrow'd from the hell,

Arranged the favor, and assumed the  
Prince.

v.

Now, scarce three paces measured from  
the mound,  
We stumbled on a stationary voice,  
And " Stand, who goes ? " " Two from  
the palace " I  
" The second two : they wait," he said,  
" pass on ;  
His Highness wakes : " and one, that  
clash'd in arms,  
By glimmering lanes and walls of can-  
vas, led  
Threading the soldier-city, till we  
heard  
The drowsy folds of our great ensign  
shake  
From blazon'd lions o'er the imperial  
tent  
Whispers of war.

Entering, the sudden light  
Dazed me half-blind : I stood and  
seem'd to hear,  
As in a poplar grove when a light wind  
wakes  
A lisping of the innumerable leaf and  
dies,  
Each hissing in his neighbor's ears ;  
and then  
A strangled titter, out of which there  
broke  
On all sides, clamoring etiquette to  
death,  
Unmeasured mirth ; while now the two  
old kings  
Began to wag their baldness up and  
down,  
The fresh young captains flash'd their  
glittering teeth,  
The huge bush-bearded Barons heaved  
and blew,  
And slain with laughter roll'd the  
gilded Squire.

At length my Sire, his rough cheek  
wet with tears,  
Panted from weary sides " King, you  
are free !  
We did but keep you surety for our  
son,  
If this be he,—or a draggled mawkin,  
thou,  
That tends her bristled granters in the  
sludge : "  
For I was drench'd with ooze, and torn  
with briers,  
More crumpled than a poppy from the  
sheath,  
And all one rag, disprinc'd from head  
to heel.  
Then some one sent beneath his vault-  
ed palm  
A whisper'd jest from some one near  
him " Look,  
He has been among his shadows." " Sa-  
tan take  
The old women and their shadows ! "  
(thus the King

Roar'd) "make yourself a man to fight  
with men.

Go: Cyril told us all."

As boys that slink  
From ferule and the trespass-chiding  
eye,

Away we stole, and transient in a trice  
From what was left of faded woman-  
slough

To sheathing splendors and the golden  
scale

Of harness, issued in the sun, that now  
Leapt from the dewy shoulders of the  
Earth,

And hit the Northern hills. Here Cyril  
met us,

A little shy at first, but by and by  
We twain with mutual pardon ask'd  
and given

For stroke and song, resolder'd peace,  
whereon

Follow'd his tale. Amazed he flew away  
Thro' the dark land, and later in the  
night

Had come on Psyche weeping: "then  
we fell

Into your father's hand, and there she  
lies,

But will not speak, nor stir."

He show'd a tent  
A stone-shot off: we enter'd in, and  
there

Among piled arms and rough accoutre-  
ments,

Pitiful sight, wrapp'd in a soldier's  
cloak,

Like some sweet sculpture draped from  
head to foot,

And push'd by rude hands from its  
pedestal,

All her fair length upon the ground  
she lay:

And at her head a follower of the camp,  
A charr'd and wrinkled piece of wo-  
manhood,

Sat watching like a watcher by the  
dead.

Then Florian knelt, and "Come" he  
whisper'd to her,

"Lift up your head, sweet sister: lie  
not thus.

What have you done but right? you  
could not slay

Me, nor your prince. look up: be com-  
forted:

Sweet is it to have done the thing one  
ought,

When fall'n in darker ways." And  
likewise I:

"Be comforted: have I not lost her  
too,

In whose least act abides the nameless  
charm

That none has else for me?" She  
heard, she moved,

She moan'd, a folded voice; and up  
she sat,

And raised the cloak from brows as  
pale and smooth

As those that mourn half-shrouded  
over death

In deathless marble. "Her" she said  
"my friend—

Parted from her—betray'd her cause  
and mine—

Where shall I breathe? why kept ye  
not your faith?

O base and bad! what comfort? none  
for me!"

To whom remorseful Cyril "Yet I pray  
Take comfort: live, dear lady, for your  
child!"

At which she lifted up her voice and  
cried.

"Ah me, my babe, my blossom, al-  
my child,

My one sweet child, whom I shall see  
no more!

For now will cruel Ida keep her back;  
And either she will die from want of  
care,

Or sicken with ill-usage, when they  
say

The child is hers—for every little  
fault,

The child is hers; and they will beat  
my girl

Remembering her mother: O my flow-  
er!

Or they will take her, they will make  
her hard,

And she will pass me by in after-life  
With some cold reverence worse than  
were she dead.

Ill mother that I was to leave her  
there,

To lag behind, scared by the cry they  
made,

The horror of the shame among them  
all:

But I will go and sit beside the doors,  
And make a wild petition night and  
day,

Until they hate to hear me like a wind  
Wailing for ever, till they open to me,

And lay my little blossom at my feet,  
My babe, my sweet Aglaia, my one  
child:

And I will take her up and go my way,  
And satisfy my soul with kissing her:

Ah! what might that man not deserve  
of me,

Who gave me back my child?" "Be  
comforted"

Said Cyril "you shall have it:" but  
again

She veil'd her brows, and prone she  
sank, and so

Like tender things that being caught,  
feign death,

Spoke not, nor stirr'd.

By this a murmur ran  
Thro' all the camp and inward raced  
the scouts

With rumor of Prince Arac hard at  
hand.

We left her by the woman, and with  
out

Found the gray kings at parle: and  
 "Look you" cried  
 My father "that our compact be fulfil'd:  
 You have spoilt this child; she laughs  
 at you and man:  
 She wrongs herself, her sex, and me  
 and him:  
 But red-faced war has rods of steel and  
 fire;  
 She yields, or war."

Then Gama turn'd to me:  
 "We fear, indeed, you spent a stormy  
 time  
 With our strange girl: and yet they  
 say that still  
 You love her. Give us, then, your  
 mind at large:  
 How say you, war or not?"

"Not war, if possible,  
 O king," I said, "lest from the abuse  
 of war,  
 The desecrated shrine, the trampled  
 year,  
 The smouldering homestead, and the  
 household flower  
 Torn from the lintel—all the common  
 wrong—  
 A smoke go up thro' which I loom to  
 her

Three times a monster: now she light-  
 ens scorn  
 At him that mars her plan, but then  
 would hate  
 (And every voice she talk'd with ratify  
 it,

And every face she look'd on justify it)  
 The general foe. More soluble is this  
 knot,  
 By gentleness than war. I want her  
 love.

What were I nigher this altho' we  
 dash'd

Your cities into shards with catapults,  
 She would not love;—or brought her  
 chain'd, a slave,

The lifting of whose eyelash is my lord,  
 Not ever would she love; but brood-  
 ing turn

The book of scorn, till all my flitting  
 chance

Were caught within the record of her  
 wrongs,

And crush'd to death: and rather, Sire,  
 than this

I would the old God of war himself  
 were dead,

Forgotten, rusting on his iron hills,  
 Rotting on some wild shore with ribs  
 of wreck,

Or like an old-world mammoth bulk'd  
 in ice,

Not to be molten out."

And roughly spake  
 My father, "Tut, you know them not,  
 the girls.

Boy, when I hear you prate I almost  
 think

That idiot legend credible. Look you,  
 Sir!

Man is the hunter; woman is his game:  
 The sleek and shiping creatures of the  
 chase,

We hunt them for the beauty of their  
 skins;

They love us for it, and we ride them  
 down.

Wheeling and siding with them! Out!  
 for shame!

Boy, there's no rose that's half so dear  
 to them

As he that does the thing they dare  
 not do,

Breathing and sounding beauteous bat-  
 tle, comes

With the air of the trumpet round him,  
 and leaps in

Among the women, snares them by the  
 score

Flatter'd and fluster'd, wins, tho'  
 dash'd with death

He reddens what he kisses: thus I won  
 Your mother, a good mother, a good  
 wife,

Worth winning; but this firebrand—  
 gentleness

To such as her! if Cyrril spake her true,  
 To catch a dragon in a cherry net,

To trip a tigress with a gossamer,  
 Were wisdom to it."

"Yea but Sire," I cried,  
 "Wild natures need wise curbs. The  
 soldier? No:

What dares not Ida do that she should  
 prize

The soldier? I beheld her when she rose  
 The yesternight, and storming in ex-  
 tremes

Stood for her cause, and flung defiance  
 down

Gagelike to man, and had not shunn'd  
 the death,

No, not the soldier's: yet I hold her,  
 king,

True woman: but you clash them all  
 in one,

That have as many differences as we.  
 The violet varies from the lily as far

As oak from elm: one loves the sol-  
 dier, one

The silken priest of peace, one this,  
 one that,

And some unworthily; their sinless  
 faith,

A maiden moon that sparkles on a sty,  
 Glorifying clown and satyr; whence  
 they need

More breadth of culture: is not Ida  
 right?

They worth it? truer to the law with-  
 in?

Severer in the logic of a life?  
 Twice as magnetic to sweet influences  
 Of earth and heaven? and she of whom  
 you speak,

My mother, looks as whole as some  
 serene

Creation minted in the golden moods,  
 Of sovereign artists; not a thought, a  
 touch,

But pure as lines of green that streak  
the white  
Of the first snowdrop's inner leaves ;  
I say,  
Not like the piebald miscellany, man,  
Bursts of great heart and slips in sensual mire,  
But whole and one : and take them all-  
in-all,  
Were we ourselves but half as good, as  
kind,  
As truthful, much that Ida claims as  
right  
Had ne'er been mooted, but as frankly  
theirs  
As dues of Nature. To our point : not  
war :  
Lest I lose all."  
"Nay, nay, you spake but sense,"  
Said Gama. "We remember love our-  
self  
In our sweet youth ; we did not rate  
him then  
This red-hot iron to be shaped with  
blows.  
You talk almost like Ida : *she* can talk ;  
And there is something in it as you say :  
But you talk kinder : we esteem you  
for it.—  
He seems a gracious and a gallant  
Prince,  
I would he had our daughter : for the  
rest,  
Our own detention, why, the causes  
weigh'd,  
Fatherly fears—you used us courte-  
ously—  
We would do much to gratify your  
Prince—  
We pardon it ; and for your ingress  
here  
Upon the skirt and fringe of our fair  
land,  
You did but come as goblins in the  
night,  
Nor in the furrow broke the plough-  
man's head,  
Nor burnt the grange, nor buss'd the  
milking-maid,  
Nor robb'd the farmer of his bowl of  
cream :  
But let your Prince (our royal word  
upon it,  
He comes back safe) ride with us to  
our lines,  
And speak with Arac : Arac's word is  
thrice [done—  
As ours with Ida : something may be  
I know not what—and ours shall see  
us friends.  
You, likewise, our late guests, if so  
you will,  
Follow us : who knows ? we four may  
build some plan  
Foursquare to opposition."

Here he reach'd

White hands of farewell to my sire,  
who growl'd  
An answer which, half-muffled in his  
beard,

Let so much out as gave us leave to  
go.

Then rode we with the old king  
across the lawns  
Beneath huge trees, a thousand rings  
of Spring  
In every bole, a song on every spray  
Of birds that piped their Valentines,  
and woke  
Desire in me to infuse my tale of love  
In the old king's ears, who promised  
help, and oozed  
All o'er with honey'd answer as we  
rode ;  
And blossom-fragrant slept the heavy  
dews  
Gather'd by night and peace, with each  
light air  
On our mail'd heads : but other  
thoughts than Peace  
Burnt in us, when we saw the embat-  
tled squares,  
And squadrons of the Prince, tramp-  
ling the flowers  
With clamor : for among them rose a cry  
As if to greet the king ; they made a  
halt ;  
The horses yell'd ; they clash'd their  
arms ; the drum  
Beat ; merrily-blowing shrill'd the  
martial fife ;  
And in the blast and bray of the long  
horn  
And serpent-throated bugle, undulated  
The banner : anon to meet us lightly  
pranced  
Three captains out ; nor ever had I seen  
Such thews of men : the midmost and  
the highest  
Was Arac : all about his motion clung  
The shadow of his sister, as the beam  
Of the East, that play'd upon them,  
made them glance  
Like those three stars of the airy  
Giant's zone,  
That glitter burnish'd by the frosty  
dark ;  
And as the fiery Sirius alters hue,  
And bickers into red and emerald,  
shone  
Their morions, wash'd with morning,  
as they came.

And I that prated peace, when first I  
heard  
War-music, felt the blind wildbeast of  
force,  
Whose home is in the sinews of a man,  
Stir in me as to strike : then took the  
king  
His three broad sons ; with now a wan-  
dering hand  
And now a pointed finger, told them all.  
A common light of smiles at our dis-  
guise  
Broke from their lips, and, ere the  
windy jest  
Had labor'd down within his ample  
lungs,

The genial giant, Arac, roll'd himself  
Thrice in the saddle, then burst out in  
words.

"Our land invaded, 'sdeath! and he  
himself  
Your captive, yet my father wills not  
war:

And, 'sdeath! myself, what care I, war  
or no?

But then this question of your troth re-  
mains:

And there's a downright honest mean-  
ing in her;

She flies too high, she flies too high!  
and yet

She ask'd but space and fairplay for her  
scheme;

She prest and prest it on me—I my-  
self,

What know I of these things? but,  
life and soul!

I thought her half-right talking of her  
wrongs;

I say she flies too high, 'sdeath! what  
of that?

I take her for the flower of woman-  
kind,

And so I often told her, right or wrong,  
And, Prince, she can be sweet to those  
she loves,

And, right or wrong, I care not: this is  
all,

I stand upon her side: she made me  
swear it—

'Sdeath—and with solemn rites by  
candle-light—

Swear by St. something—I forget her  
name—

Her that talked down the fifty wisest  
men;

She was a princess too; and so I swore.  
Come, this is all; she will not: waive  
your claim:

If not, the foughten field, what else, at  
once

Decides it, 'sdeath! against my father's  
will."

I lag'd in answer loath to render up  
My precontract, and loath by brainless  
war

To cleave the rift of difference deeper  
yet;

Till one of those two brothers, half  
aside

And fingering at the hair about his lip,  
To prick us on to combat "Like to  
like!

The woman's garment hid the woman's  
heart."

A taunt that clench'd his purpose like  
a blow!

For fiery-short was Cyril's counter-  
scoff,

And sharp I answer'd, touch'd upon  
the point

Where idle boys are cowards to their  
shame,

"Decide it here: why not? we are  
three to three."

Then spake the third, "But three to  
three? no more?

No more, and in our noble sister's  
cause?

More, more, for honor: every captain  
waits

Hungry for honor, angry for his king.  
More, more, some fifty on a side, that  
each

May breathe himself, and quick! by  
overthrow

Of these or those, the question settled  
die."

"Yea" answered I "for this wild  
wreath of air,

This flake of rainbow flying on the  
highest

Foam of men's deeds—this honor, if  
ye will.

It needs must be for honor if at all:  
Since, what decision? if we fail, we fail,  
And if we win, we fail: she would not  
keep

Her compact," "'Sdeath! but we will  
send to her,"

Said Arac, "worthy reasons why she  
should

Bide by this issue: let our missive  
thro'

And you shall have her answer by the  
word."

"Boys!" shrieked the old king, but  
vainlier than a hen

To her false daughters in the pool; for  
none

Regarded; neither seem'd there more  
to say:

Back rode we to my father's camp, and  
found

He thrice had sent a herald to the gates,  
To learn if Ida yet would cede our  
claim,

Or by denial flush her babbling wells  
With her own people's life: three times  
he went:

The first, he blew and blew, but none  
appear'd:

He batter'd at the doors; none came:  
the next,

An awful voice within had warn'd him  
thence:

The third, and those eight daughters  
of the plough

Came sallying thro' the gates, and  
caught his hair,

And so belabor'd him on rib and cheek  
They made him wild: not less one  
glance he caught

Thro' open doors of Ida station'd  
there

Unshaken, clinging to her purpose,  
firm

Tho' compass'd by two armies and the  
noise

Of arms; and standing like a stately  
Pine

Set in a cataract on an island-erag,

When storm is on the heights, and  
right and left  
Suck'd from the dark heart of the long  
hills roll  
The torrents, dash'd to the vale : and  
yet her will  
Bred will in me to overcome it or fall.

But when I told the king that I was  
pledged  
To fight in tourney for my bride, he  
clash'd  
His iron palms together with a cry ;  
Himself would tilt it out among the  
lads ;  
But overborne by all his bearded lords  
With reasons drawn from age and  
state, perforce  
He yielded, wroth and red, with fierce  
demur :  
And many a bold knight started up in  
heat,  
And sware to combat for my claim till  
death.

All on this side the palace ran the  
field  
Flat to the garden-wall : and likewise  
here,  
Above the garden's glowing blossom-  
belts,  
A column'd entry shone and marble  
stairs,  
And great bronze valves, emboss'd  
with Tomyris  
And what she did to Cyrus after fight,  
But now fast barr'd : so here upon the  
flat  
All that long morn the lists were ham-  
mer'd up,  
And all that morn the heralds to and  
fro,  
With message and defiance, went and  
came ;  
Last, Ida's answer, in a royal hand,  
But shaken here and there, and roll-  
ing words  
Oration-like. I kiss'd it and I read.

"O brother, you have known the  
pangs we felt,  
What heats of indignation when we  
heard  
Of those that iron-cramp'd their wo-  
men's feet ;  
Of lands in which at the altar the poor  
bride  
Gives her harsh groom for bridal-gift  
a scourge ;  
Of living hearts that crack within the  
fire  
Where smoulder their dead despots ;  
and of those,—  
Mothers,—that, all prophetic pity,  
fling  
Their pretty maids in the running  
flood, and swoops  
The vulture, beak and talon, at the  
heart  
Made for all noble motion : and I saw

That equal baseness lived in sleeker  
times  
With smoother men : the old heaven  
heaven'd all :  
Millions of throats would bawl for civil  
rights,  
No woman named : therefore I set my  
face  
Against all men, and lived but for  
mine own.  
Far off from men I built a fold for  
them :  
I stored it full of rich memorial :  
I fenced it round with gallant insti-  
tutes,  
And biting laws to scare the beasts of  
prey,  
And prosper'd ; till a rout of saucy  
boys  
Brake on us at our books, and marr'd  
our peace,  
Mask'd like our maids, blustering I  
know not what  
Of insolence and love, some pretext  
held  
Of baby troth, invalid, since my will  
Seal'd not the bond—the striplings !—  
for their sport !—  
I tamed my leopards : shall I not tame  
these ?  
Or you ? or I ? for since you think me  
touch'd  
In honor—what, I would not aught of  
false—  
Is not our cause pure ? and whereas I  
know  
Your prowess, Arac, and what mother's  
blood  
You draw from, fight ; you failing, I  
abide  
What end soever : fail you will not.  
Still  
Take not his life : he risk'd it for my  
own ;  
His mother lives : yet whatsoe'er you  
do,  
Fight and fight well ; strike and strike  
home. O dear  
Brothers, the woman's Angel guards  
you, you  
The sole men to be mingled with our  
cause,  
The sole men we shall prize in the  
aftertime,  
Your very armor hallow'd, and your  
statues  
Rear'd, sung to, when, this gad-fly  
brush'd aside,  
We plant a solid foot into the Time,  
And mould a generation strong to move  
With claim on claim from right to  
right, till she  
Whose name is yoked with children's,  
know herself ;  
And Knowledge in our own land make  
her free,  
And, ever following those two crowned  
twins,  
Commerce and conquest, shower the  
fiery grain

Of freedom broadcast over all that  
orbs  
Between the Northern and the South-  
ern morn."

Then came a postscript dash'd across  
the rest.  
"See that there be no traitors in your  
camp:  
We seem a nest of traitors—none to  
trust  
Since our arms fail'd—this Egypt-  
plague of men!  
Almost our maids were better at their  
homes,  
Than thus man-girdled here: indeed I  
think  
Our chiefest comfort is the little child  
Of one unworthy mother; which she  
left:  
She shall not have it back: the child  
shall grow  
To prize the authentic mother of her  
mind.  
I took it for an hour in mine own bed  
This morning: there the tender orphan  
hands  
Felt at my heart, and seem'd to charm  
from thence  
The wrath I nursed against the world:  
farewell."

I ceased; he said: "Stubborn, but  
she may sit  
Upon a king's right hand in thunder-  
storms,  
And breed up warriors! See now, tho'  
yourself  
Be dazzled by the wildfire Love to  
sloughs  
That swallow common sense, the spind-  
ling king,  
This Gama swamp'd in lazy tolerance.  
When the man wants weight, the wo-  
man takes it up,  
And topples down the scales; but this  
is fixt  
As are the roots of earth and base of all;  
Man for the field and woman for the  
hearth:  
Man for the sword and for the needle  
she:  
Man with the head and woman with  
the heart:  
Man to command and woman to obey;  
All else confusion. Look you! the gray  
mare  
Is ill to live with, when her whinny  
shrills  
From tile to scullery, and her small  
goodman  
Shrinks in his arm-chair while the fires  
of Hell  
Mix with his hearth: but you—she's  
yet a colt—  
Take, break her: strongly groom'd and  
straitly curb'd  
She might not rank with those detest-  
able

That let the bantling scald at home,  
and brawl  
Their rights or wrongs like potherbs  
in the street.  
They say she's comely; there's the  
fairer chance:  
I like her none the less for rating at  
her!  
Besides, the woman wed is not as we,  
But suffers change of frame. A lusty  
brace

Of twins may weed her of her folly.  
Boy,  
The bearing and the training of a child  
Is woman's wisdom."

Thus the hard old king:  
I took my leave, for it was nearly noon:  
I pored upon her letter which I held,  
And on the little clause "take not his  
life:"

I mused on that wild morning in the  
woods,  
And on the "Follow, follow, thou shalt  
win:"

I thought on all the wrathful king had  
said,  
And how the strange betrothment was  
to end:  
Then I remember'd that burnt sorcer-  
er's curse  
That one should fight with shadows  
and should fail;  
And like a flash the weird affection  
came:

King, camp, and college turn'd to hol-  
low shows;  
I seem'd to move in old memorial tilts,  
And doing battle with forbidden  
ghosts,

To dream myself the shadow of a  
dream:

And ere I woke it was the point of  
noon,

The lists were ready. Empanoplied  
and plumed

We enter'd in, and waited, fifty there  
Opposed to fifty, till the trumpet blared  
At the barrier like a wild horn in a  
land

Of echoes, and a moment, and once  
more

The trumpet, and again: at which the  
storm

Of galloping hoofs bare on the ridge of  
spears

And riders front to front, until they  
closed

In conflict with the crash of shivering  
points,

And thunder. Yet it seem'd a dream,  
I dream'd

Of fighting. On his haunches rose the  
steed,

And into fiery splinters leapt the lance,  
And out of stricken helmets sprang  
the fire.

Part sat like rocks: part reel'd but  
kept their seats:

Part roll'd on the earth and rose again  
and drew:

Part stumbled mixt with floundering  
horses. Down  
From those two bulks at Arac's side,  
and down  
From Arac's arm, as from a giant's flail,  
The large blows rain'd, as here and  
everywhere  
He rode the mellay, lord of the ringing  
lists,  
And all the plain,—brand, mace, and  
shaft, and shield—  
Shock'd, like an iron-clanging anvil  
bang'd  
With hammers; till I thought, can this  
be he  
From Gama's dwarfish loins ? if this be  
so,  
The mother makes us most—and in my  
dream  
I glanced aside, and saw the palace-  
front  
Alive with fluttering scarfs and ladies'  
eyes,  
And highest, among the statues, statue-  
like,  
Between a cymbal'd Miriam and a Jael,  
With Psyche's babe, was Ida watching  
us,  
A single band of gold about her hair,  
Like a Saint's glory up in heaven : but  
she  
No saint—inexorable—no tenderness—  
Too hard, too cruel yet she sees me  
fight,  
Yea, let her see me fall ! with that I  
drave  
Among the thickest and bore down a  
Prince,  
And Cyril, one. Yea, let me make my  
dream  
All that I would. But that large-mould-  
ed man,  
His visage all agrin as at a wake,  
Made at me thro' the press, and stag-  
gering back  
With stroke on stroke the horse and  
horseman, came  
As comes a pillar of electric cloud,  
Flaying the roofs and sucking up the  
drains,  
And shadowing down the champaign  
till it strikes  
On a wood, and takes, and breaks, and  
cracks, and splits,  
And twists the grain with such a roar  
that Earth  
Reels, and the herdsmen cry ; for  
everything  
Gave way before him : "only Florian,  
he  
That loved me closer than his own  
right eye,  
Thrust in between ; but Arac rode him  
down :  
And Cyril seeing it, push'd against the  
Prince,  
With Psyche's color round his helmet,  
tough,  
Strong, supple, sinew-corded, apt at  
arms "

But tougher, heavier, stronger, he that  
smote  
And threw him : last I spurr'd ; I felt  
my veins  
Stretch with fierce heat ; a moment  
hand to hand,  
And sword to sword, and horse to  
horse we hung,  
Till I struck out and shouted ; the  
blade glanced ;  
I did but shear a feather, and dream  
and truth  
Flow'd from me ; darkness closed me ;  
and I fell.

---

Home they brought her warrior dead :  
She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry :  
All her maidens, watching, said,  
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,  
Call'd him worthy to be loved,  
Truest friend and noblest foe ;  
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,  
Lightly to the warrior slept,  
Took the face-cloth from the face ;  
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,  
Set his child upon her knee—  
Like summer tempest came her tears—  
"Sweet my child, I live for thee."

## VI.

My dream had never died or lived  
again.

As in some mystic middle state I lay ;  
Seeing I saw not, hearing not I heard :  
Tho' if I saw not, yet they told me all  
So often that I speak as having seen.

For so it seem'd, or so they said to  
me,  
That all things grew more tragic and  
more strange ;  
That when our side was vanquish'd  
and my cause  
For ever lost, there went up a great  
cry,  
The Prince is slain. My father heard  
and ran  
In on the lists, and there unlaced my  
casque  
And grovell'd on my body, and after  
him  
Came Psyche, sorrowing for Aglaia.

But high upon the palace Ida stood  
With Psyche's babe in arm : there on  
the roofs  
Like that great dame of Lapidoth she  
sang.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have  
fall'n : the seed,  
The little seed they laughed at in the  
dark,

Has risen and cleft the soil, and  
grown a bulk  
Of spanless girth, that lays on every  
side  
A thousand arms and rushes to the  
Sun.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have  
fall'n : they came ;  
The leaves were wet with women's  
tears : they heard  
A noise of songs they would not un-  
derstand :  
They mark'd it with the red cross to the  
fall,  
And would have strown it, and are  
fall'n themselves.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have  
fall'n : they came,  
The woodmen with their axes : lo the  
tree !  
But we will make it fagots for the  
hearth,  
And shape it plank and beam for roof  
and floor,  
And boats and bridges for the use of  
men.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have  
fall'n : they struck ;  
With their own blows they hurt them-  
selves, nor knew  
There dwelt an iron nature in the  
grain :  
The glittering axe was broken in their  
arms,  
Their arms were shatter'd to the shoul-  
der blade.

"Our enemies have fall'n, but this  
shall grow  
A night of Summer from the heat, a  
breadth  
Of Autumn, dropping fruits of power ;  
and roll'd  
With music in the growing breeze of  
Time,  
The tops shall strike from star to star,  
the fangs  
Shall move the stony bases of the  
world.

"And now, O maids, behold our sanctu-  
ary  
Is violate, our laws broken : fear we  
not  
To break them more in their behoof,  
whose arms  
Champion'd our cause and won it with  
a day  
Blanch'd in our annals, and perpetual  
feast,  
When dames and heroines of the gold-  
en year  
Shall strip a hundred hollows bare of  
Spring,  
To rain an April of ovation round  
Their statues, borne aloft, the three :  
but come,

We will be liberal, since ~~our rights are~~  
won.  
Let them not lie in the tents with  
coarse mankind,  
Ill nurses ; but descend, and proffer  
these  
The brethren of our blood and cause,  
that there  
Lie bruised and maim'd, the tender  
ministries  
Of female hands and hospitality."

She spoke, and with the babe yet in  
her arms,  
Descending, burst the great bronze  
valves, and led  
A hundred maids in train across the  
Park.  
Some cowl'd, and some bare-headed,  
on they came,  
Their feet in flowers, her loveliest : by  
them went  
The enamor'd air sighing, and on their  
curls  
From the high tree the blossom waver-  
ing fell,  
And over them the tremulous isles of  
light  
Slided, they moving under shade : but  
Blanche  
At distance follow'd : so they came :  
anon  
Thro' open field into the lists they  
wound  
Timorously ; and as the leader of the  
herd  
That holds a stately fretwork to the  
Sun,  
And follow'd up by a hundred airy  
does,  
Steps with a tender foot, light as on  
air,  
The lovely, lordly creature floated on  
To where her wounded brethren lay ;  
there stay'd ;  
Knelt on one knee,—the child on one,  
—and prest  
Their hands, and call'd them dear de-  
liverers,  
And happy warriors, and immortal  
names,  
And said "You shall not lie in the  
tents but here,  
And nursed by those for whom you  
fought, and served  
With female hands and hospitality."

Then, whether moved by this, or was  
it chance,  
She past my way. Up started from my  
side  
The old lion, glaring with his whelp-  
less eye,  
Silent ; but when she saw me lying  
stark,  
Dishelm'd and mute, and motionlessly  
pale,  
Cold ev'n to her, she sigh'd ; and when  
she saw

The haggard father's face and rever-  
end beard  
Of grisly twine, all dabbled with the  
blood  
Of his own son, shudder'd, a twitch of  
pain  
Tortured her, mouth, and o'er her fore-  
head past  
A shadow, and her hue changed, and  
she said:  
"He saved my life: my brother slew  
him for it."  
No more: at which the king in bitter  
scorn  
Drew from my neck the painting and  
the tress,  
And held them up: she saw them, and  
a day  
Rose from the distance on her memory,  
When the good Queen, her mother,  
shore the tress  
With kisses, ere the days of Lady  
Blanche:  
And then once more she look'd at my  
pale face:  
Till understanding all the foolish work  
Of Fancy, and the bitter close of all,  
Her iron will was broken in her mind;  
Her noble heart was molten in her  
breast;  
She bow'd, she set the child on the  
earth; she laid  
A feeling finger on my brows, and  
presently  
"O Sire," she said, "he lives: he is  
not dead:  
O let me have him with my brethren  
here  
In our own palace: we will tend on him  
Like one of these; if so, by any means,  
To lighten this great clog of thanks,  
that make  
Our progress falter to the woman's  
goal."

She said: but at the happy word "he  
lives"  
My father stoop'd, re-father'd o'er my  
wounds.  
So those two foes above my fall'n life.  
With brow to brow like night and eve-  
ning mixt  
Their dark and gray, while Psyche ever  
stole  
A little nearer, till the babe that by us,  
Half-lapt in glowing gauze and golden  
brede,  
Lay like a new-fall'n meteor on the  
grass,  
Uncared for, spied its mother and began  
A blind and babbling laughter, and to  
dance  
Its body, and reach its fatling innocent  
arms  
And lazy lingering fingers. She the ap-  
peal  
Brook'd not, but clamoring out, "Mine  
—mine—not yours,  
It is not yours, but mine; give me the  
child"

Ceased all on tremble: piteous was the  
cry:  
So stood the unhappy mother open-  
mouth'd,  
And turn'd each face her way: wan  
was her cheek  
With hollow watch, her blooming man-  
tle torn,  
Red grief and mother's hunger in her  
eye,  
And down dead-heavy sank her curls,  
and half  
The sacred mother's bosom, panting,  
burst  
The laces toward her babe; but she  
nor cared  
Nor knew it, clamoring on, till Ida  
heard,  
Look'd up, and rising slowly from me,  
stood  
Erect and silent, striking with her  
glance  
The mother, me, the child; but he  
that lay  
Beside us, Cyril, battered as he was,  
Trail'd himself up on one knee; then  
he drew  
Her robe to meet his lips, and down  
she look'd  
At the arm'd man sideways, pitying as  
it seem'd,  
Or self-involved; but when she learnt  
his face,  
Remembering his ill-omen'd song,  
arose  
Once more thro' all her height, and  
o'er him grew  
Tall as a figure lengthen'd on the sand  
When the tide ebbs in sunshine, and  
he said:

"O fair and strong and terrible!  
Lioness  
That with your long locks play the  
Lion's mane!  
But Love and Nature, these are two  
more terrible  
And stronger. See, your foot is on our  
necks,  
We vanquish'd, you the Victor of your  
will.  
What would you more? give her the  
child! remain  
Orb'd in your isolation: he is dead,  
Or all as dead: henceforth we let you  
be:  
Win you the hearts of women; and be-  
ware  
Lest, where you seek the common love  
of these,  
The common hate with the revolving  
wheel  
Should drag you down, and some great  
Nemesis  
Break from a darken'd future, crown'd  
with fire,  
And tread you out for ever: but how-  
soe'er  
Fix'd in yourself, never in your own  
arms

To hold your own, deny nothers to her,  
 Give her the child! O if, I say, you  
 keep  
 One pulse that beats true woman, if  
 you loved  
 The breast that fed or arm that dand-  
 led you,  
 Or own one part of sense not flint to  
 prayer,  
 Give her the child! or if you scorn to  
 lay it,  
 Yourself, in hands so lately claspt with  
 yours,  
 Or speak to her, your dearest, her one  
 fault  
 The tenderness, not yours, that could  
 not kill,  
 Give me it: I will give it her."

He said;  
 At first her eye with slow dilation roll'd  
 Dry flame, she listening; after sank  
 and sank  
 And, into mournful twilight mellow-  
 ing, dwelt  
 Full on the child; she took it: "Pretty  
 bud!  
 Lily of the vale! half open'd bell of the  
 woods!  
 Sole comfort of my dark hour, when a  
 world  
 Of traitorous friend and broken system  
 made  
 No purple in the distance, mystery,  
 Pledge of a love not to be mine, fare-  
 well;  
 These men are hard upon us as of  
 old,  
 We two must part: and yet how fain  
 was I  
 To dream thy cause embraced in mine,  
 to think  
 I might be something to thee, when I  
 felt  
 Thy helpless warmth about my barren  
 breast  
 In the dead prime: but may thy mo-  
 ther prove  
 As true to thee as false, false, false to  
 me!  
 And, if thou needs must bear the yoke,  
 I wish it  
 Gentle as freedom"—here she kiss'd it:  
 then—  
 "All good go with thee! take it Sir"  
 and so  
 Laid the soft babe in his hard-mailed  
 hands,  
 Who turn'd half-round to Psyche as she  
 sprang  
 To meet it, with an eye that swum in  
 thanks;  
 Then felt it sound and whole from head  
 to foot,  
 And hugg'd, and never hugg'd it close  
 enough,  
 And in her hunger mouth'd and mum-  
 bled it,  
 And hid her bosom with it; after that  
 Put on more calm and added suppli-  
 antly;

"We two were friends: I go to mind  
 own land  
 For ever: find some other: as for me  
 I scarce am fit for your great plans:  
 yet speak to me,  
 Say one soft word and let me part for-  
 given."

But Ida spoke not, rapt upon the  
 child.  
 Then Arac, "Ida—s'death! you  
 blame the man;  
 You wrong yourselves—the woman is  
 so hard  
 Upon the woman. Come, a grace to  
 me!  
 I am your warrior: I and mine have  
 fought  
 Your battle: kiss her; take her hand,  
 she weeps:  
 'Sdeath! I would sooner fight thrice  
 o'er than see it."

But Ida spoke not, gazing on the  
 ground,  
 And reddening in the furrows of his  
 chin,  
 And moved beyond his custom, Gama  
 said:

"I've heard that there is iron in the  
 blood,  
 And I believe it. Not one word? not  
 one?  
 Whence drew you this steel temper?  
 not from me,  
 Not from your mother now a saint with  
 saints.  
 She said you had a heart—I heard her  
 say it—  
 'Our Ida has a heart'—just ere she  
 died—  
 'But see that some one with authority  
 Be near her still'—and I—I sought  
 for one—  
 All people said she had authority—  
 The Lady Blanche: much profit! Not  
 one word;  
 No! tho' your father sues: see how  
 you stand  
 Stiff as Lot's wife, and all the good  
 knights maim'd,  
 I trust that there is no one hurt to  
 death,  
 For your wild whim: and was it then  
 for this,  
 Was it for this we gave our palace up,  
 Where we withdrew from summer heats  
 and state,  
 And had our wine and chess beneath  
 the planes,  
 And many a pleasant hour with her  
 that's gone,  
 Ere you were born to vex us? Is it  
 kind?  
 Speak to her I say: is this not she of  
 whom,  
 When first she came, all flush'd you  
 said to me

Now had you got a friend of your own  
age,

Now could you share your thought;  
now should men see

Two women faster welded in one love  
Than pairs of wedlock; she you walk'd  
with, she

You talk'd with, whole nights long, up  
in the tower,

Of sine and arc, spheroid and azimuth,  
And right ascension, Heaven knows

what; and now  
A word, but one, one little kindly word,  
Not one to spare her: out upon you,

flint!

You love nor her, nor me, nor any; nay,  
You shame your mother's judgment

too. Not one?

You will not? well — no heart have  
you, or such

As fancies like the vermin in a nut  
Have fretted all to dust and bitter-

ness."

So said the small king moved beyond  
his wont.

But Ida stood nor spoke, urain'd of  
her force

By many a varying influence and so  
long.

Down thro' her limbs a drooping lan-  
guor wept:

Her head a little bent; and on her  
mouth

A doubtful smile dwelt like a clouded  
moon

In a still water: then brake out my sire  
Lifting his grim head from my wounds.

"O you,  
Woman, whom we thought woman even  
now,

And were half fool'd to let you tend  
our son,

Because he might have wish'd it — but  
we see

The accomplice of your madness unfor-  
given,

And think that you might mix his  
draught with death,

When your skies change again: the  
rougher hand

Is safer: on to the tents: take up the  
Prince."

He rose, and while each ear was  
prick'd to attend

A tempest, thro' the cloud that dimm'd  
her broke

A genial warmth and light once more,  
and shone

Thro' glittering drops on her sad friend.

"Come hither,  
O Psyche," she cried out, "embrace  
me, come,

Quick while I melt; make reconcile-  
ment sure

With one that cannot keep her mind  
an hour:

Come to the hollow heart they slander  
so!

Kiss and be friends, like children being  
chid!

I seem no more: I want forgiveness  
too:

I should have had to do with none but  
maids,

That have no links with men. Ah false  
but dear,

Dear traitor, too much loved, why? —  
why? — Yet see,

Before these kings we embrace you yet  
once more

With all forgiveness, all oblivion,  
And trust, not love, you less.

And now, O sire,  
Grant me your son, to nurse, to wait  
upon him,

Like mine own brother. For my debt  
to him,

This nightmare weight of gratitude, I  
know it;

Taunt me no more: yourself and yours  
shall have

Free adit; we will scatter all our maids  
Till happier times each to her proper

hearth:

What use to keep them here — now?  
grant my prayer.

Help, father, brother, help; speak to  
the king:

Thaw this male nature to some touch  
of that

Which kills me with myself, and drags  
me down

From my fixt height to mob me up with  
all

The soft and milky rabble of woman-  
kind,

Poor weakling ev'n as they are."

Passionate tears  
Follow'd: the king replied not: Cyril  
said:

Your brother, Lady, — Florian, — ask  
for him

Of your great head — for he is wounded  
too —

That you may tend upon him with the  
prince."

"Ay so," said Ida with a bitter smile,  
"Our laws are broken: let him enter  
too."

Then Violet, she that sang the mourn-  
ful song,

And had a cousin tumbled on the plain,  
Petition'd too for him. "Ay so," she  
said,

"I stagger in the stream: I cannot  
keep

My heart an eddy from the brawling  
hour:

We break our laws with ease, but let it  
be."

"Ay so?" said Blanche: "Amazed  
am I to hear

Your Highness: but your Highness  
breaks with ease

The law your Highness did not make:  
't was I.

I had been wedded wife, I knew man-  
kind,

And block'd them out; but these men  
came to woo  
Your Highness—verily I think to  
win."

So she, and turn'd askance a wintry  
eye:

But Ida with a voice, that like a bell  
Toll'd by an earthquake in a trembling  
tower,  
Rang ruin, answer'd full of grief and  
scorn.

"Fling our doors wide! all, all, not  
one, but all,

Not only he, but by my mother's soul,  
Whatever man lies wounded, friend or  
foe,

Shall enter, if he will. Let our girls flit,  
Till the storm die! but had you stood  
by us,

The roar that breaks the Pharos from  
his base

Had left us rock. She fain would sting  
us too,

But shall not. Pass, and mingle with  
your likes.

We brook no further insult but are  
gone."

She turn'd; the very nape of her  
white neck

Was rosed with indignation: but the  
Prince

Her brother came; the king her father  
charm'd

Her wounded soul with words: nor did  
mine own

Refuse her proffer, lastly gave his  
hand.

Then us they lifted up, dead weights,  
and bare

Straight to the doors: to them the  
doors gave way

Groaning, and in the Vestal entry  
shriek'd

The virgin marble under iron heels:  
And on they moved and gain'd the hall,  
and there

Rest'd: but great the crush was, and  
each base,

To left and right, of those tall columns  
drown'd

In silken fluctuation and the swarm  
Of female whisperers: at the further  
end

Was Ida by the throne, the two great  
cats

Close by her, like supporters on a  
shield,

Bow-back'd with fear: but in the centre  
stood,

The common men with rolling eyes;  
amazed

They glared upon the women, and  
aghast

The women stared at these, all silent,  
save

When armor clash'd or jingled, while  
the day,

Descending, struck athwart the hall,  
and shot

A flying splendor out of brass and steel,  
That o'er the statues leapt from head  
to head,

Now fired an angry Pallas on the helm,  
Now set a wrathful Dian's moon on  
flame,

And now and then an echo started up,  
And shuddering fled from room to  
room, and died

Of fright in far apartments.

Then the voice  
Of Ida sounded, issuing ordinance:

And me they bore up the broad stairs,  
and thro'

The long-laid galleries past a hundred  
doors

To one deep chamber shut from sound,  
and due

To languid limbs and sickness; left  
me in it;

And others elsewhere they laid; and  
all

That afternoon a sound arose of hoof  
And chariot, many a maiden passing  
home

Till happier times; but some were left  
of those

Held sagest, and the great lords out  
and in,

From those two hosts that lay beside  
the walls,

Walk'd at their will, and everything  
was changed.

Ask me no more: the moon may draw  
the sea;

The cloud may stoop from heaven  
and take the shape,

With fold to fold, of mountain or of  
cape;

But O too fond, when have I answer'd  
thee?

Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should  
I give?

I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:  
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee  
die!

Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee  
live;

Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine  
are seal'd:

I strove against the stream and all in  
vain:

Let the great river take me to the  
main:

No more, dear love, for at a touch I  
yield;

Ask me no more.

#### VII.

So was their sanctuary violated,

So their fair college turn'd to hospital;

At first with all confusion: by and by

Sweet order lived again with other laws :

A kindlier influence reign'd ; and everywhere

Low voices with the ministering hand Hung round the sick : the maidens came, they talk'd,

They sang, they read : till she not fair, began

To gather light, and she that was, became

Her former beauty treble ; and to and fro

With books, with flowers, with Angel offices,

Like creatures native unto gracious act, And in their own clear element they moved.

But sadness on the soul of Ida fell, And hatred of her weakness, blent with shame.

Old studies fail'd ; seldom she spoke ; but oft

Clomb to the roofs, and gazed alone for hours

On that disastrous leaguer, swarms of men

Darkening her female field : void was her use,

And she as one that climbs a peak to gaze

O'er land and main, and sees a great black cloud

Drag inwards from the deeps, a wall of night,

Blot out the slope of sea from verge to shore,

And suck the blinding splendor from the sand,

And quenching lake by lake and tarn by tarn

Expunge the world : so fared she gazing there ;

So blacken'd all her world in secret, blank

And waste it seem'd and vain ; till down she came,

And found fair peace once more among the sick.

And twilight dawn'd ; and morn by morn the lark

Shot up and shrill'd in flickering gyres, but I

Lay silent in the muffled cage of life : And twilight gloom'd ; and broader-grown the bowers

Drew the great night into themselves, and Heaven,

Star after star, arose and fell ; but I,

Deeper than those weird doubts could reach me, lay

Quite sunder'd from the moving Universe,

Nor knew what eye was on me, nor the hand

That nursed me, more than infants in their sleep.

But Psyche tended Florian : with her oft,

Melissa came ; for Blanche had gone, but left

Her child among us, willing she should keep

Court-favor : here and there the small bright head,

A light of healing, glanced about the couch,

Or thro' the parted silks the tender face

Peep'd, shinning in upon the wounded man

With blush and smile, a medicine in themselves

To wile the length from languorous hours, and draw

The sting from pain ; nor seem'd it strange that soon

He rose up whole, and those fair charities

Join'd at her side ; nor stranger seem'd that hearts

So gentle, so employ'd, should close in love,

Than when two dew-drops on the petal shake

To the same sweet air, and tremble deeper down,

And slip at once all-fragrant into one.

Less prosperously the second suit obtained

At first with Psyche. Not tho' Blanche had sworn

That after that dark night among the fields,

She needs must wed him for her own good name ;

Not tho' he built upon the babe restored ;

Nor tho' she liked him, yielded she, but fear'd

To incense the Head once more ; till on a day

When Cyril pleaded, Ida came behind Seen but of Psyche : on her foot she hung

A moment, and she heard, at which her face

A little flush'd, and she past on ; but each

Assumed from thence a half-consent involved

In stillness, plighted troth, and were at peace.

Nor only these : Love in the sacred halls

Held carnival at will, and flying struck With showers of random sweet on maid and man.

Nor did her father cease to press my claim,

Nor did mine own now reconciled ; nor yet

Did those twin brothers, risen again and whole ;

Nor Arac, satiate with his victory.

But I lay still, and with me oft she  
 sat :  
 Then came a change ; for sometimes I  
 would catch  
 Her hand in wild delirium, gripe it  
 hard,  
 And fling it like a viper off, and shriek  
 "You are not Ida ;" clasp it once  
 again,  
 And call her Ida, tho' I knew her not,  
 And call her sweet, as if in irony,  
 And call her hard and cold which  
 seem'd a truth :  
 And still she fear'd that I should lose  
 my mind,  
 And often she believed that I should  
 die :  
 Till out of long frustration of her care,  
 And pensive tendance in the all-weary  
 noons,  
 And watches in the dead, the dark,  
 when clocks  
 Throb'd thunder thro' the palace  
 floors, or call'd  
 On flying Time from all their silver  
 tongues—  
 And out of memories of her kindlier  
 days,  
 And sidelong glances at my father's  
 grief,  
 And at the happy lovers, heart in  
 heart—  
 And out of hauntings of my spoken  
 love,  
 And lonely listenings to my mother'd  
 dream,  
 And often feeling of the helpless hands,  
 And wordless broodings on the wasted  
 cheek—  
 From all a closer interest flourish'd up,  
 Tenderness touch by touch, and last, to  
 these,  
 Love, like an Alpine harebell hung  
 with tears  
 By some cold morning glacier ; frail at  
 first  
 And feeble, all unconscious of itself,  
 But such as gather'd color day by day.

Last I woke sane, but wellnigh close  
 to death  
 For weakness : it was evening : silent  
 light  
 Slept on the painted walls, wherein  
 were wrought  
 Two grand designs ; for on one side  
 arose  
 The women up in wild revolt, and  
 storm'd  
 At the Oppian law. Titanic shapes,  
 they cramm'd  
 The forum, and half-crush'd among  
 the rest  
 A dwarf-like Cato cower'd. On the  
 other side  
 Hortensia spoke against the tax ; be-  
 hind,  
 A train of dames : by axe and eagle sat,  
 With all their foreheads drawn in Ro-  
 man crows,

And half the wolf's-milk eurdled in  
 their veins,  
 The fierce triumphs ; and before them  
 paused  
 Hortensia, pleading : angry was her  
 face.

I saw the forms : I knew not where  
 I was :  
 They did but look like hollow shows ;  
 nor more  
 Sweet Ida : palm to palm she sat : the  
 dew  
 Dwelt in her eyes, and softer all her  
 shape  
 And rounder seem'd : I moved : I  
 sigh'd : a touch  
 Came round my wrist, and tears upon  
 my hand :  
 Then all for languor and self-pity ran  
 Mine down my face, and with what life  
 I had,  
 And like a flower that cannot all un-  
 fold,  
 So drench'd it is with tempest, to the  
 sun,  
 Yet, as it may, turns toward him, I on  
 her  
 Fixt my faint eyes, and utter'd whis-  
 peringly :

"If you be, what I think you, some  
 sweet dream,  
 I would but ask you to fulfil yourself :  
 But if you be that Ida whom I knew,  
 I ask you nothing : only, if a dream,  
 Sweet dream, be perfect. I shall die  
 to-night.  
 Stoop down and seem to kiss me ere I  
 die."

I could no more, but lay like one in  
 trance,  
 That hears his burial talk'd of by his  
 friends,  
 And cannot speak, nor move, nor make  
 one sign,  
 But lies and dreads his doom. She  
 turn'd ; she paus'd ;  
 She stoop'd ; and out of languor leapt  
 a cry ;  
 Leapt fiery Passion from the brinks of  
 death ;  
 And I believed that in the living world  
 My spirit clos'd with Ida's at the lips ;  
 Till back I fell, and from mine arms  
 she rose  
 Glowing all over noble shame ; and all  
 Her falser self slipt from her like a  
 robe,  
 And left her woman, lovelier in her  
 mood  
 Than in her mould that other, when  
 she came  
 From barren deeps to conquer all with  
 love ;  
 And down the streaming crystal dropt ;  
 and she  
 Far-fleetc'd by the purple island-sides,  
 Naked, a double light in air and wave,

To meet her Graces, where they deck'd  
her out  
For worship without end ; nor end of  
mine,  
Stateliest, for thee ! but mute she  
glided forth,  
Nor glanced behind her, and I sank  
and slept,  
Fill'd thro' and thro' with Love, a  
happy sleep.

Deep in the night I woke : she, near  
me, held  
A volume of the Poets of her land :  
There to herself, all in low tones, she  
read.

" Now sleeps the crimson petal, now  
the white ;  
Nor waves the cypress in the palace  
walk ;  
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry  
font ;  
The fire-fly wakens : waken thou with  
me.

" Now droops the milk-white pea-  
cock like a ghost,  
And like a ghost she glimmers on to  
me.

" Now lies the Earth all Danaë to  
the stars,  
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

" Now slides the silent meteor on,  
and leaves  
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in  
me.

" Now folds the lily all her sweetness  
up,  
And slips into the bosom of the lake :  
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and  
slip  
Into my bosom and be lost in me."

I heard her turn the page ; she found  
a small  
Sweet Idyl, and once more, as low, she  
read :

" Come down, O maid, from yonder  
mountain height :  
What pleasure lives in height (the  
shepherd sang)  
In height and cold, the splendor of the  
hills ?  
But cease to move so near the Hea-  
vens, and cease,  
To glide a sunbeam by the blasted  
Pine,  
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire ;  
And come, for Love is of the valley,  
come,  
For Love is of the valley, come thou  
down  
And find him ; by the happy threshold,  
he,  
Or hand in hand with Plenty in the  
maize,

Or red with spirted purple of the vats,  
Or foxlike in the vine ; nor cares to  
walk

With Death and Morning on the silver  
horns,  
Nor wilt thou snare him in the white  
ravine,  
Nor find him dropt upon the firths of  
ice,  
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven  
falls

To roll the torrent out of dusky doors :  
But follow ; let the torrent dance  
thee down

To find him in the valley ; let the wild  
Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and  
leave

The monstrous ledges there to slope,  
and spill

Their thousand wreaths of dangling  
water-smoke,

That like a broken purpose waste in  
air :

So waste not thou ; but come ; for all  
the vales

Await thee ; azure pillars of the hearth  
Arise to thee ; the children call, and I  
Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every  
sound,

Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is  
sweet ;

Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the  
lawn,

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,  
And murmuring of innumerable bees."

So she low-toned ; while with shut  
eyes I lay

Listening ; then look'd. Pale was the  
perfect face ;

The bosom with long sighs labor'd ;  
and meek

Seem'd the full lips, and mild the lu-  
minous eyes,

And the voice trembled and the hand.  
She said

Brokenly, that she knew it, she had  
fail'd

In sweet humility ; had fail'd in all ;  
That all her labor was but as a block

Left in the quarry ; but she still were  
loath,

She still were loath to yield herself to  
one,

That wholly scorn'd to help their equal  
rights

Against the sons of men, and barbarous  
laws.

She pray'd me not to judge their cause  
from her

That wrong'd it, sought far less for  
truth than power

In knowledge : something wild within  
her breast,

A greater than all knowledge, beat her  
down.

And she had nursed me there from  
week to week :

Much had she learnt 'n little time. In  
part

It was ill counsel had misled the girl  
To vex true hearts : yet was she but a  
girl—

“ Ah fool, and made myself a Queen  
of farce !

When comes another such ? never, I  
think,

Till the Sun drop dead from the signs.”

Her voice  
Choked, and her forehead sank upon  
her hands,

And her great heart thro’ all the fault-  
ful Past

Went sorrowing in a pause I dared not  
break ;

Till notice of a change in the dark  
world

Was lispt about the acacias, and a bird,  
That early woke to feed her little ones,  
Sent from a dewy breast a cry for light :  
She moved, and at her feet the volume  
fell.

“ Blame not thyself too much,” I  
said, “ nor blame

Too much the sons of men and barba-  
rous laws ;

These were the rough ways of the  
world till now.

Henceforth thou hast a helper, me,  
that know

The woman’s cause is man’s : they rise  
or sink

Together, dwarf’d or godlike, bond or  
free :

For she that ont of Lethe scales with  
man

The shining steps of Nature, shares  
with man

His nights, his days, moves with him  
to one goal,

Stays all the fair young planet in her  
hands—

If she be small, slight-natured, misera-  
ble,

How shall men grow ? but work no  
more alone !

Our place is much : as far as in us lies  
We two will serve them both in aiding  
her—

Will clear away the parasitic forms  
That seem to keep her up but drag her  
down—

Will leave her space to burgeon out of  
all

Within her—let her make herself her  
own

To give or keep, to live and learn and be  
All that not harms distinctive woman-  
hood.

For woman is not undevelop’t man,  
But diverse : could we make her as the  
man,

Sweet Love were slain : his dearest  
bond is this,

Not like to like, but like in difference.  
Yet in the long years liker must they  
grow ;

The man be more of woman, she of  
man ;

He gain in sweetness and in moral  
height,

Nor lose the wrestling thews that  
throw the world ;

She mental breadth, nor fail in child-  
ward care,

Nor lose the childlike in the larger  
mind ;

Till at the last she set herself to man,  
Like perfect music unto noble words ;

And so these twain, upon the skirts of  
Time,

Sit side by side, full-summ’d in all  
their powers,

Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,  
Self-reverent each and reverencing  
each,

Distinct in individualities,  
But like each other ev’n as those who  
love.

Then comes the statelier Eden back to  
men :

Then reign the world’s great bridals,  
chaste and calm :

Then springs the crowning race of hu-  
mankind.

May these things be ! ”

Sighing she spoke “ I fear  
They will not.”

“ Dear, but let us type them  
now

In our own lives, and this proud  
watchword rest

Of equal ; seeing either sex alone  
Is half itself, and in true marriage lies

Nor equal, nor unequal : each fulfils  
Defect in each, and always thought in  
thought,

Purpose in purpose, will in will, they  
grow,

The single pure and perfect animal,  
The two-cell’d heart beating, with one  
full stroke,

Life.”

And again sighing she spoke : “ A  
dream

That once was mine ! what woman  
taught you this ? ”

“ Alone ” I said “ from earlier than  
I know,

Immersed in rich foreshadowings of  
the world,

I loved the woman : he, that doth not,  
lives

A drowning life, besotted in sweet self,  
Or pines in sad experience worse than  
death,

Or keeps his wing’d affections clipt with  
crime :

Yet was there one thro’ whom I loved  
her, one

Not learned, save in gracious house-  
hold ways,

Not perfect, nay, but full of tender  
wants,

No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipt  
In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise,  
Interpreter between the Gods and  
men,

Who look'd all native to her place, and yet  
 On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a sphere  
 Too gross to tread, and all male minds  
 perforce  
 Sway'd to her from their orbits as they  
 moved,  
 And girdled her with music. Happy he  
 With such a mother! faith in woman-  
 kind  
 Beats with his blood, and trust in all  
 things high  
 Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip  
 and fall  
 He shall not blind his soul with clay."  
 "But I,"  
 Said Ida, tremulously, "so all unlike—  
 It seems you love to cheat yourself  
 with words:  
 This mother is your model. I have heard  
 Of your strange doubts: they well  
 might be: I seem  
 A mockery to my own self. Never,  
 Prince;  
 You cannot love me."  
 "Nay but thee" I said  
 "From yearlong poring on thy pictured  
 eyes,  
 Ere seen I loved, and loved thee seen,  
 and saw  
 Thee woman thro' the crust of iron  
 moods  
 That mask'd thee from men's reverence  
 up, and forced  
 Sweet love on pranks of saucy boyhood:  
 now,  
 Giv'n back to life, to life indeed, thro'  
 thee,  
 Indeed I love: the new day comes, the  
 light  
 Dearer for night, as dearer thou for  
 faults  
 Lived over: lift thine eyes; my doubts  
 are dead,  
 My haunting sense of hollow shows;  
 the change,  
 This truthful change in thee has kill'd  
 it. Dear,  
 Look up, and let thy nature strike on  
 mine,  
 Like yonder morning on the blind half-  
 world;  
 Approach and fear not; breathe upon  
 my brows;  
 In that fine air I tremble, all the past  
 Melts mist-like into this bright hour,  
 and this  
 Is morn to more, and all the rich to-  
 come  
 Reels, as the golden Autumn woodland  
 reels  
 Athwart the smoke of burning weeds.  
 Forgive me,  
 I waste my heart in signs: let be,  
 My bride,  
 My wife, my life. O we will walk this  
 world,  
 Yoked in all exercise of noble end,  
 And so thro' those dark gates across  
 the wild

That no man knows. Indeed I love  
 thee: come,  
 Yield thyself up: my hopes and thine  
 are one:  
 Accomplish thou my manhood and  
 thyself;  
 Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust  
 to me."

# CONCLUSION.

So closed our tale, of which I give you  
 all  
 The random scheme as wildly as it rose:  
 The words are mostly mine; for when  
 we ceased  
 There came a minute's pause, and  
 Walter said,  
 "I wish she had not yielded!" then  
 to me,  
 "What, if you drest it up poetically!"  
 So pray'd the men, the women: I gave  
 assent:  
 Yet how to bind the scattered scheme  
 of seven  
 Together in one sheaf? What style  
 could suit?  
 The men required that I should give  
 throughout  
 The sort of mock-heroic gigantesque,  
 With which we banter'd little Lilia first:  
 The women—and perhaps they felt  
 their power,  
 For something in the ballads which  
 they sang,  
 Or in their silent influence as they sat,  
 Had ever seem'd to wrestle with bur-  
 lesque,  
 And drove us, last, to quite a solemn  
 close—  
 They hated banter, wish'd for some-  
 thing real,  
 A gallant fight, a noble princess—why  
 Not make her true-heroic—true-sub-  
 lime?  
 Or all, they said, as earnest as the close?  
 Which yet with such a framework  
 scarce could be.  
 Then rose a little feud betwixt the two,  
 Betwixt the mockers and the realists:  
 And I, betwixt them both, to please  
 them both,  
 And yet to give the story as it rose,  
 I moved as in a strange diagonal,  
 And may be neither pleased myself nor  
 them.

But Lilia pleased me, for she took no  
 part  
 In our dispute: the sequel of the  
 tale  
 Had touch'd her; and she sat, she  
 pluck'd the grass,  
 She flung it from her, thinking: last,  
 she fixt  
 A showery glance upon her aunt, and  
 said,  
 "You—tell us what we are" who  
 might have told,

For she was cramm'd with theories out  
of books,  
But that there rose a shout : the gates  
were closed  
At sunset, and the crowd were swarm-  
ing now,  
To take their leave, about the garden  
rails.

So I and some went out to these :  
we climb'd  
The slope to Vivian-place, and turning  
saw  
The happy valleys, half in light, and  
half  
Far-shadowing from the west, a land  
of peace ;  
Gray halls alone among their massive  
groves ;  
Trim hamlets ; here and there a rustic  
tower  
Half-lost in belts of hop and breadths  
of wheat ;  
The shimmering glimpses of a stream ;  
the seas ;  
A red sail, or a white ; and far beyond,  
Imagined more than seen, the skirts  
of France.

"Look there, a garden !" said my  
college friend,  
The Tory member's elder son "and  
there !  
God bless the narrow sea which keeps  
her off,  
And keeps our Britain, whole within  
herself,  
A nation yet, the rulers and the ruled—  
Some sense of duty, something of a  
faith,  
Some reverence for the laws ourselves  
have made,  
Some patient force to change them  
when we will,  
Some civic manhood firm against the  
crowd—  
But yonder, whiff ! there comes a  
sudden heat,  
The gravest citizen seems to lose his  
head,  
The king is scared, the soldier will not  
fight,  
The little boys begin to shoot and stab,  
A kingdom topples over with a shriek  
Like an old woman, and down rolls the  
world  
In mock heroics stranger than our own ;  
Revolts, republics, revolutions, most  
No graver than a school boys' barring  
out ;  
Too comic for the solemn things they  
are,  
Too solemn for the comic touches in  
them,  
Like our wild Princess with as wise a  
dream  
As some of theirs—God bless the nar-  
row seas !  
I wish they were a whole Atlantic  
broad."

"Have patience," I replied, "our  
selves are full  
Of social wrong ; and maybe wildest  
dreams  
Are but the needful preludes of the  
truth :  
For me, the genial day, the happy crowd,  
The sport half-science, fill me with a  
faith,  
This fine old world of ours is but a  
child  
Yet in the go-cart. Patience ! Give it  
time  
To learn its limbs : there is a hand that  
guides."

In such discourse we gain'd the gar-  
den rails,  
And there we saw Sir Walter where he  
stood,  
Before a tower of crimson holly-oaks,  
Among six boys, head under head, and  
look'd  
No little lily-handed Baronet he,  
A great broad-shoulder'd genial Eng-  
lishman,  
A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep,  
A raiser of huge melons and of pine,  
A patron of some thirty charities,  
A pamphleteer on guano and on grain,  
A quarter-sessions chairman, abler  
none ;  
Fair-hair'd and redder than a windy  
morn ;  
Now shaking hands with him, now  
him, of those  
That stood the nearest—now address'd  
to speech—  
Who spoke few words and pithy, such  
as closed  
Welcome, farewell, and welcome for  
the year  
To follow : a shout rose again, and  
made  
The long line of the approaching rook-  
ery swerve  
From the elms, and shook the branches  
of the deer  
From slope to slope thro' distant ferns,  
and rang  
Beyond the bourn of sunset ; O, a shout  
More joyful than the city-roar that hails  
Premier or king ! Why should not these  
great Sirs  
Give up their parks some dozen times  
a year  
To let the people breathe ? So thrice  
they cried,  
I likewise, and in groups they stream'd  
away.

But we went back to the Abbey, and  
sat on,  
So much the gathering darkness  
charm'd : we sat  
But spoke not, rapt in nameless revery—  
Perhaps upon the future man : the  
walls  
Blacken'd about us, bats wheel'd, and  
owls whoop'd,

And gradually the powers of the night,  
That range above the region of the  
wind,  
Deepening the courts of twilight broke  
them up  
Thro' all the silent spaces of the worlds,  
Beyond all thought into the Heaven of  
Heavens.

Last little Lilia, rising quietly,  
Disrobed the glimmering statue of Sir  
Ralph  
From those rich silks, and home well-  
pleased we went.

ENOCH ARDEN.

Long lines of cliff breaking have left a  
chasm ;  
And in the chasm are foam and yellow  
sands ;  
Beyond, red roofs about a narrow  
wharf  
In cluster ; then a moulder'd, church ;  
and higher  
A long street climbs to one tall-tower'd  
mill,  
And high in heaven behind it a gray  
down  
With Danish barrows ; and a hazelwood,  
By autumn nutters haunted, flourishes  
Green in a cuplike hollow of the down.

Here on this beach a hundred years ago,  
Three children of three houses, Annie  
Lee,  
The prettiest little damsel in the port,  
And Philip Ray the miller's only son,  
And Enoch Arden a rough sailor's lad  
Made orphan by a winter shipwreck,  
play'd  
Among the waste and lumber of the  
shore,  
Hard coils of cordage, swarthy fishing-  
nets,  
Anchors of rusty fluke, and boats up-  
drawn ;  
And built their castles of dissolving  
sand  
To watch them overflow'd, or following  
up  
And flying the white breaker, daily left  
The little footprint daily wash'd away.

A narrow cave ran in beneath the  
cliff :  
In this the children play'd at keeping  
house.  
Enoch was host one day, Philip the  
next,  
While Annie still was mistress ; but at  
times  
Enoch would hold possession for a  
week :  
" This is my house and this my little  
wife."

" Mine too " said Philip " turn and  
turn about."  
When, if they quarrell'd, Enoch strong-  
er-made  
Was master ; then would Philip, his  
blue eyes  
All flooded with the helpless wrath of  
tears,  
Shriek out " I hate you, Enoch," and  
at this  
The little wife would weep for com-  
pany,  
And pray them not to quarrel for her  
sake,  
And say she would be little wife to  
both.

But when the dawn of rosy child-  
hood past,  
And the new warmth of life's ascend-  
ing sun  
Was felt by either, either fixt his heart  
On that one girl ; and Enoch spoke his  
love,  
But Philip loved in silence ; and the  
girl  
Seem'd kinder unto Philip than to  
him ;  
But she loved Enoch ; tho' she knew it  
not,  
And would if ask'd deny it. Enoch set  
A purpose evermore before his eyes,  
To hoard all savings to the uttermost,  
To purchase his own boat, and make a  
home  
For Annie : and so prosper'd that at  
last  
A luckier or a bolder fisherman,  
A carefuller in peril, did not breathe  
For leagues along that breaker-beaten  
coast  
Than Enoch. Likewise had he served  
a year  
On board a merchantman, and made  
himself  
Full sailor ; and he thrice had pluck'd a  
life  
From the dread sweep of the down-  
streaming seas :  
And all men look'd upon him favorably :  
And ere he touch'd his one-and-twen-  
tieth May  
He purchased his own boat, and made  
a home  
For Annie, neat and nestlike, halfway  
up  
The narrow street that clamber'd  
toward the mill.

Then, on a golden autumn eventide,  
The younger people making holiday,  
With bag and sack and basket, great  
and small,  
Went nutting to the hazels. Philip  
stay'd  
(His father lying sick and needing him)  
An hour behind ; but as he climb'd the  
hill,  
Just where the prone edge of the wood  
began

To feather toward the hollow, saw the pair,  
 Enoch and Annie, sitting hand-in-hand,  
 His large grey eyes and weather-beaten face  
 All-kindled by a still and sacred fire,  
 That burn'd as on an altar. Philip  
 look'd,  
 And in their eyes and faces read his doom;  
 Then, as their faces drew together,  
 groan'd,  
 And slipt aside, and like a wounded life  
 Crept down into the hollows of the wood;  
 There, while the rest were loud in merry-making.  
 Had his dark hour unseen, and rose  
 and past  
 Bearing a lifelong hunger in his heart.

So these were wed, and merrily rang  
 the bells,  
 And merrily ran the years, seven happy  
 years,  
 Seven happy years of health and competence,  
 And mutual love and honorable toil;  
 With children; first a daughter. In  
 him woke,  
 With his first babe's first cry, the noble wish

To save all earnings to the uttermost,  
 And give his child a better bringing-up  
 Than his had been, or hers; a wish renewed,

When two years after came a boy to be  
 The rosy idol of her solitudes,  
 While Enoch was abroad on wrathful  
 seas,

Or often journeying landward; for in truth

Enoch's white horse, and Enoch's ocean-spoil

In ocean-smelling osler, and his face,  
 Rough-redden'd with a thousand winter  
 gales,

Not only to the market-cross were known,

But in the leafy lanes behind the down  
 Far as the portal-warding lion-whelp,  
 And peacock-yewtree of the lonely  
 Hall,

Whose Friday fare was Enoch's ministering.

Then came a change, as all things  
 human change.

Ten miles to northward of the narrow  
 port

Open'd a larger haven: thither used  
 Enoch at times to go by land or sea;  
 And once when there, and clambering  
 on a mast

In harbor, by mischance he slipt and  
 fell:

A limb was broken when they lifted  
 him;

And while he lay recovering there, his  
 wife

Bore him another sea, a sickly one:  
 Another hand crept too across his trade  
 Taking her bread and theirs: and on  
 him fell,

Altho' a grave and staid God-fearing  
 man,

Yet lying thus inactive, doubt and  
 gloom.

He seem'd, as in a nightmare of the  
 night,

To see his children leading evermore  
 Low miserable lives of hand-to-mouth,

And her, he lov'd, a beggar: then he  
 pray'd

"Save them from this, whatever comes  
 to me."

And while he pray'd, the master of  
 that ship

Enoch had served in, hearing his mis-  
 chance,

Came, for he knew the man and valued  
 him,

Reporting of his vessel China bound,  
 And wanting yet a boatswain. Would  
 he go?

There yet were many weeks before she  
 sail'd,

Sail'd from this port, Would Enoch  
 have the place?

And Enoch all at once assented to it,  
 Rejoicing at that answer, to his prayer.

So now that shadow of mischance ap-  
 pear'd

No graver than as when some little  
 cloud

Cuts off the fiery highway of the sun,  
 And isles a light in the offing; yet the  
 wife—

When he was gone—the children—  
 What to do?

Then Enoch lay long-pondering on his  
 plans;

To sell the boat—and yet he lov'd her  
 well—

How many a rough sea had he weath-  
 er'd in her!

He knew her, as a horseman knows  
 his horse—

And yet to sell her—then with what she  
 brought

Buy goods and stores—set Annie forth  
 in trade

With all that seamen needed or their  
 wives—

So might she keep the house while he  
 was gone.

Should he not trade himself out yonder?  
 go

This voyage more than once? yea twice  
 or thrice—

As oft as needed—last, returning rich,  
 Become the master of a larger craft,

With fuller profits lead an easier life,  
 Have all his pretty young ones edu-  
 cated,

And pass his days in peace among his  
 own.

Thus Enoch in his heart determined  
all :  
Then moving homeward came on Annie  
pale,  
Nursing the sickly babe, her latest-  
born.  
Forward she started with a happy cry,  
And laid the feeble infant in his arms ;  
Whom Enoch took, and handled all his  
limbs,  
Appraised his weight and fondled  
father-like,  
But had no heart to break his purposes  
To Annie, till the morrow, when he  
spoke.

Then first since Enoch's golden ring  
had girt  
Her finger, Annie fought against his  
will ;  
Yet not with brawling opposition she,  
But manifold entreaties, many a tear,  
Many a sad kiss by day by night  
renew'd  
(Sure that all evil would come out of it)  
Besought him, supplicating, if he cared  
For her or his dear children, not to go.  
He not for his own self caring but her,  
Her and her children, let her plead in  
vain ;  
So grieving held his will, and bore it  
thro.

For Enoch parted with his old sea-  
friend,  
Bought Annie goods and stores, and set  
his hand  
To fit their little streetward sitting-  
room  
With shelf and corner for the goods  
and stores.  
So all day long till Enoch's last at home  
Shaking their pretty cabin, hammer  
and axe,  
Auger and saw, while Annie seem'd to  
hear  
Her own death-scaffold raising, shrill'd  
and rang,  
Till this was ended, and his careful  
hand,—  
The space was narrow,—having order'd  
all  
Almost as neat and close as Nature  
packs  
Her blossom or her seedling, paused ;  
and he,  
Who needs would work for Annie to  
the last,  
Ascending tired, heavily slept till morn

And Enoch faced this morning of  
farewell  
Brightly and boldly. All his Annie's  
fears,  
Save, as his Annie's, were a laughter to  
him.  
Yet Enoch as a brave God-fearing man  
Bow'd himself down, and in that  
mystery  
Where God-in-man is one with man-  
in-God,

Pray'd for a blessing on his wife and  
babes  
Whatever came to him : and then he  
said  
" Annie, this voyage by the grace of  
God  
Will bring fair weather yet to all of us.  
Keep a clean hearth and a clear fire  
for me,  
For I'll be back, my girl, before you  
know it."  
Then lightly rocking baby's cradle  
" and he,  
This pretty, puny, weakly little one,—  
Nay—for I love him all the better for  
it—  
God bless him, he shall sit upon my  
knees  
And I will tell him tales of foreign  
parts,  
And make him merry, when I come  
home again.  
Come Annie, come, cheer up before I  
go."

Him running on thus hopefully she  
heard  
And almost hoped herself ; but when  
he turn'd  
The current of his talk to graver things  
In sailor fashion roughly sermonizing  
On providence and trust in Heaven,  
she heard,  
Heard and not heard him ; as the vil-  
lage girl,  
Who sets her pitcher underneath the  
spring,  
Musing on him that used to fill it for  
her,  
Hears and not hears, and lets it over-  
flow.

At length she spoke " O Enoch, you  
are wise ;  
And yet for all your wisdom well know I  
That I shall look upon your face no  
more."

" Well then " said Enoch, " I shall  
look on yours.  
Annie, the ship I sail in passes here  
(He named the day) ; get you a sea-  
man's glass,  
Spy out my face, and laugh at all your  
fears."

But when the last of those last mo-  
ments came.  
" Annie, my girl, cheer up, be com-  
forted,  
Look to the babes ; and till I come  
again,  
Keep everything shipshape, for I must  
go.  
And fear no more for me ; or if you fear  
Cast all your cares on God ; that an-  
chor holds.  
Is he not yonder in those uttermost  
Parts of the morning ? if I flee to these  
Can I go from him ? and the sea is His,  
The sea is His : He made it."

Enoch rose  
 Cast his strong arms about his drooping  
 wife,  
 And kiss'd his wonder-stricken little  
 ones;  
 But for the third, the sickly one, who  
 slept  
 After a night of feverous wakefulness,  
 When Annie would have raised him  
 Enoch said  
 "Wake him not; let him sleep; how  
 should the child  
 Remember this?" and kiss'd him in  
 his cot.  
 But Annie from her baby's forehead  
 clipt  
 A tiny curl, and gave it: this he kept  
 Thro' all his future; but now hastily  
 caught  
 His bundle, waved his hand, and went  
 his way.

She when the day, that Enoch men-  
 tion'd, came,  
 Borrow'd a glass, but all in vain; per-  
 haps  
 She could not fix the glass to suit her  
 eye;  
 Perhaps her eye was dim, hand tremu-  
 lous;  
 She saw him not: and while he stood  
 on deck  
 Waving, the moment and the vessel  
 past.

Ev'n to the last dip of the vanishing  
 sail  
 She watch'd it, and departed weeping  
 for him;  
 Then, tho' she mourn'd his absence as  
 his grave,  
 Set her sad will no less to chime with  
 his,  
 But throve not in her trade, not being  
 bred  
 To barter, nor compensating the want  
 By shrewdness, neither capable of lies,  
 Nor asking overmuch and taking less,  
 And still foreboding "what would  
 Enoch say?"  
 For more than once, in days of diffi-  
 culty  
 And pressure, had she sold her wares  
 for less  
 Than what she gave in buying what she  
 sold:  
 She fail'd and sadden'd knowing it;  
 and thus,  
 Expectant of that news which never  
 came,  
 Gain'd for her own a scanty sustenance  
 And lived a life of silent melancholy.

Now the third child was sickly-born  
 and grew  
 Yet sicklier, tho' the mother cared  
 for it  
 With all a mother's care: nevertheless,  
 Whether her business often call'd her  
 from it,

Or thro' the want of what it needed  
 most,  
 Or means to pay the voice who best  
 could tell  
 What most it needed—howsoe'er it was,  
 After a lingering,—ere she was aware,—  
 Like the caged bird escaping suddenly,  
 The little innocent soul fitted away.

In that same week when Annie  
 buried it,  
 Philip's true heart, which hunger'd for  
 her peace  
 (Since Enoch left he had not look'd  
 upon her),  
 Smote him, as having kept aloof so  
 long,  
 "Surely," said Philip "I may see her  
 now,  
 May be some little comfort" there-  
 fore went,  
 Past thro' the solitary room in front,  
 Paused for a moment at an inner door,  
 Then struck it thrice, and, no one  
 opening,  
 Enter'd; but Annie, seated with her  
 grief,  
 Fresh from the burial of her little one.  
 Cared not to look on any human face.  
 But turn'd her own toward the wall  
 and wept.  
 Then Philip standing up said falter-  
 ingly  
 "Annie, I came to ask a favor of you."

He spoke; the passion in her moan'd  
 reply  
 "Favor from one so sad and so forlorn  
 As I am!" half abash'd him; yet  
 unask'd,  
 His bashfulness and tenderness at war,  
 He set himself beside her, saying to  
 her:

"I came to speak to you of what he  
 wish'd,  
 Enoch, your husband: I have ever said  
 You chose the best among us—a strong  
 man:  
 For where he fixt his heart he set his  
 hand  
 To do the thing he will'd, and bore it  
 thro'.  
 And wherefore did he go this weary  
 way,  
 And leave you lonely? not to see the  
 world—  
 For pleasure?—nay, but for the where-  
 withal  
 To give his babes a better bringing-up  
 Than his had been or yours; that was  
 his wish.  
 And if he come again, next will he be  
 To find the precious morning hours  
 were lost,  
 And it would vex him even in his  
 grave,  
 If he could know his babes were run-  
 ning wild  
 Like colts about the waste. So, Annie,  
 now—

Have we not known each other all our  
lives ?  
I do beseech you by the love you bear  
Him and his children not to say me  
nay—  
For, if you will, when Enoch comes  
again  
Why then he shall repay me—if you  
will,  
Annie—for I am rich and well-to-do,  
Now let me put the boy and girl to  
school :  
This is the favor that I came to ask."

Then Annie with her brows against  
the wall  
Answer'd "I cannot look you in the  
face ;  
I seem so foolish and so broken down.  
When you came in my sorrow broke  
me down ;  
And now I think your kindness breaks  
me down ;  
But Enoch lives ; that is borne in on  
me :  
He will repay you : money can be  
repaid ;  
Not kindness such as yours."

And Philip ask'd  
"Then you will let me, Annie?"

There she turn'd,  
She rose, and fixt her swimming eyes  
upon him,  
And dwelt a moment on his kindly  
face,  
Then calling down a blessing on his  
head  
Caught at his hand, and wrung it pas-  
sionately,  
And past into the little garth beyond.  
So lifted up in spirit he moved away.  
Then Philip put the boy and girl to  
school,  
And bought them needful books, and  
everyway,  
Like one who does his duty by his  
own,  
Made himself theirs ; and tho' for  
Annie's sake,  
Fearing the lazy gossip of the port,  
He oft denied his heart his dearest wish  
And seldom crost her threshold, yet  
he sent  
Gifts by the children, garden-herbs  
and fruit,  
The late and early roses from his wall,  
Or cones from the down, and now and  
then,  
With some pretext of fineness in the  
meal  
To save the offence of charitable, flour  
From his tall mill that whistled on the  
waste.

But Philip did not fathom Annie's  
mind :  
Scarce could he the woman when he came  
upon her,

Out of full heart and boundless grati-  
tude  
Light on a broken word to thank him  
with.  
But Philip was her children's all-in-  
all ;  
From distant corners of the street they  
ran  
To greet his hearty welcome heartily ;  
Lords of his house and of his mill were  
they ;  
Worried his passive ear with petty  
wrongs  
Or pleasures, hung upon him, play'd  
with him  
And call'd him Father Philip. Philip  
gain'd  
As Enoch lost ; for Enoch seem'd to  
them  
Uncertain as a vision or a dream,  
Faint as a figure seen in early dawn  
Down at the far end of an avenue,  
Going we know not where : and so ten  
years,  
Since Enoch left his hearth and native  
land,  
Fled forward, and no news of Enoch  
came.

It chanced one evening Annie's chil-  
dren long'd  
To go with others, nutting to the wood,  
And Annie would go with them ; then  
they begg'd  
For Father Philip (as they call'd him)  
too :  
Him, like the working bee in blossom-  
dust,  
Blanch'd with his mill, they found ;  
and saying to him  
"Come with us Father Philip" he  
denied ;  
But when the children pluck'd at him  
to go,  
He laugh'd, and yielded readily to  
their wish,  
For was not Annie with them? and  
they went.

But after scaling half the weary  
down,  
Just where the prone edge of the wood  
began  
To feather toward the hollow, all her  
force  
Fail'd her ; and sighing "let me rest"  
she said :  
So Philip rested with her well-content ;  
While all the younger ones with jubi-  
lant cries  
Broke from their elders, and tumultu-  
ously  
Down thro' the whitening hazels made  
a plunge  
To the bottom, and dispersed, and bent  
or broke  
The lithe reluctant boughs to tear  
away  
Their tawny clusters, crying to each  
other

And calling, here and there, about the wood.

But Philip sitting at her side forgot  
Her presence, and remember'd one  
dark hour  
Here in this wood, when like a wound-  
ed life  
He crept into the shadow: at last he  
said  
Lifting his honest forehead "Listen,  
Annie,  
How merry they are down yonder in  
the wood.  
Tired, Annie?" for she did not speak  
a word.  
"Tired?" but her face had fall'n upon  
her hands;  
At which, as with a kind of anger in  
him,  
"The ship was lost" he said "the  
ship was lost!  
No more of that! why should you kill  
yourself  
And make them orphans quite!" And  
Annie said  
"I thought not of it: but—I know  
not why—  
Their voices make me feel so solitary."

Then Philip coming somewhat closer  
spoke.  
"Annie, there is a thing upon my  
mind,  
And it has been upon my mind so long,  
That tho' I know not when it first  
came there,  
I know that it will out at last. O  
Annie,  
It is beyond all hope, against all  
chance,  
That he who left you ten long years  
ago  
Should still be living; well then—let  
me speak:  
I grieve to see you poor and wanting  
help:  
I cannot help you as I wish to do  
Unless—they say that women are so  
quick—  
Perhaps you know what I would have  
you know—  
I wish you for my wife. I fain would  
prove  
A father to your children: I do think  
They love me as a father: I am sure  
That I love them as if they were mine  
own;  
And I believe, if you were fast my wife,  
That after all these sad uncertain  
years,  
We might be still as happy as God  
grants  
To any of His creatures. Think upon  
it:  
For I am well-to-do—no kin, no care,  
No burden, save my care for you and  
yours:  
And we have known each other all  
our lives,

And I have loved you longer than you  
know."

Then answer'd Annie; tenderly she  
spoke:  
"You have been as God's good angel  
in our house.  
God, bless you for it, God reward you  
for it,  
Philip, with something happier than  
myself.  
Can one love twice? can you be ever  
loved  
As Enoch was? what is it that you  
ask?"  
"I am content" he answer'd "to be  
loved  
A little after Enoch." "O" she cried  
Scared as it were "dear Philip, wait a  
while:  
If Enoch comes—but Enoch will not  
come—  
Yet wait a year, a year is not so long:  
Surely I shall be wiser in a year:  
O wait a little!" Philip sadly said  
"Annie, as I have waited all my life  
I will may wait a little." "Nay" she  
cried  
"I am bound: you have my promise—  
in a year:  
Will you not bide your year as I bide  
mine?"  
And Philip answer'd "I will bide my  
year."

Here both were mute, till Philip glanc-  
ing up  
Beheld the dead flame of the fallen  
day  
Pass from the Danish barrow over-  
head;  
Then fearing night and chill for Annie  
rose,  
And sent his voice beneath him thro'  
the wood.  
Up came the children laden with their  
spoil;  
Then all descended to the port, and  
there  
At Annie's door he paused and gave  
his hand,  
Saying gently "Annie, when I spoke  
to you,  
That was your hour of weakness. I  
was wrong.  
I am always bound to you, but you are  
free."  
Then Annie weeping answer'd "I am  
bound."

She spoke; and in one moment as it  
were,  
While yet she went about her house-  
hold ways,  
Ev'n as she dwelt upon his latest  
words,  
That he had loved her longer than she  
knew,  
That autumn into autumn flash'd  
again,

And there he stood ones more before  
her face,  
Claiming her promise. "Is it a year?"  
she ask'd.  
"Yes, if the nuts" he said "be ripe  
again:  
Come out and see." But she—she  
put him off—  
So much to look to—such a change—  
a month—  
Give her a month—she knew that she  
was bound—  
A month—no more. Then Philip with  
his eyes  
Full of that life-long hunger, and his  
voice  
Shaking a little like a drunkard's hand,  
"Take your own time, Annie, take  
your own time."  
And Annie could have wept for pity of  
him;  
And yet she held him on delayingly  
With many a scarce-believable excuse,  
Trying his truth and his long-suffer-  
ance,  
Till half-another year had slipt away.

By this the lazy gossips of the port,  
Abhorrent of a calculation crost,  
Began to chafe as at a personal wrong.  
Some thought that Philip did but trifle  
with her;  
Some that she but held off to draw  
him on;  
And others laugh'd at her and Philip  
too,  
As simple folk that knew not their  
own minds;  
And one, in whom all evil fancies  
clung  
Like serpent eggs together, laughing-  
ly  
Would hint at worse in either. Her  
own son  
Was silent, tho' he often look'd his  
wish;  
But evermore the daughter prest upon  
her  
To wed the man so dear to all of them  
And lift the household out of pover-  
ty;  
And Philip's rosy face contracting  
grew  
Careworn and wan; and all these  
things fell on her  
Sharp as reproach.

At last one night it chanced  
That Annie could not sleep, but ear-  
nestly  
Pray'd for a sign "my Enoch is he  
gone?"  
Then compass'd round by the blind  
wall of night  
Brook'd not the expectant terror of  
her heart,  
Started from bed, and struck herself a  
light,  
Then desperately seized the holy Book,  
Suddenly set it wide to find a sign,

Suddenly put her finger on the text,  
"Under the palm-tree." That was  
nothing to her;  
No meaning there: she closed the  
Book and slept:  
When lo! her Enoch sitting on a  
height,  
Under a palm-tree, over him the Sun:  
"He is gone" she thought "he is  
happy, he is singing  
Hosanna in the highest: yonder shines  
The Sun of Righteousness, and these  
be palms  
Whereof the happy people strewing  
cried  
'Hosanna in the highest!'" Here she  
woke,  
Resolved, sent for him and said wildly  
to him  
"There is no reason why we should not  
wed."  
"Then for God's sake," he answer'd,  
"both our sakes,  
So you will wed me, let it be at once."

So these were wed and merrily rang  
the bells,  
Merrily rang the bells and they were  
wed.  
But never merrily beat Annie's heart.  
A footstep seem'd to fall beside her  
path,  
She knew not whence; a whisper on  
her ear,  
She knew not what; nor loved she to  
be left  
Alone at home, nor ventured out alone.  
What ail'd her then, that ere she  
enter'd, often  
Her hand dwelt lingeringly on the  
latch,  
Fearing to enter: Philip thought he  
knew:  
Such doubts and fears were common to  
her state,  
Being with child: but when her child  
was born,  
Then her new child was as herself  
renew'd,  
Then the new mother came about her  
heart,  
Then her good Philip was her all-in-  
all,  
And that mysterious instinct wholly  
died.

And were was Enoch? prosper-  
ously sail'd  
The ship "Good Fortunate," tho' at set,  
ting forth  
The Biscay, roughly ridging eastward  
shook  
And almost overwhelm'd her, yet  
unvext  
She slipt across the summer of the  
world,  
Then after a long tumble about the  
Cape  
And frequent interchange of foul and  
fair

She passing thro' the summer world  
 again,  
 The breath of heaven came continu-  
 ally  
 And sent her sweetly by the golden  
 isles,  
 Till silent in her oriental haven.

There Enoch traded for himself, and  
 bought  
 Quaint monsters for the market of  
 those times,  
 A gilded dragon also, for the babes.

Less lucky her home-voyage : at first  
 indeed  
 Thro' many a fair sea-circle, day by  
 day,  
 Scarce-rocking, her full-busted figure-  
 head  
 Stared o'er the ripple feathering from  
 her bows :  
 Then follow'd calms, and then winds  
 variable,  
 Then baffling, a long course of them ;  
 and last  
 Storm, such as drove her under moon-  
 less heavens  
 Till hard upon the cry of " breakers "   
 came  
 The crash of ruin, and the loss of all  
 But Enoch and two others. Half the  
 night,  
 Buoy'd upon floating tackle and broken  
 spars,  
 These drifted, stranding on an isle at  
 morn  
 Rich, but the loneliest in a lonely sea.

No want was there of human sus-  
 tenance  
 Soft fruitage, mighty nuts, and nourish-  
 ing roots ;  
 Nor save for pity was it hard to take  
 The helpless life so wild that it was  
 tame.  
 There in a seaward-gazing mountain-  
 gorge  
 They built, and thatch'd with leaves of  
 palm, a hut,  
 Half hut, half native cavern. So the  
 three,  
 Set in this Eden of all plenteousness,  
 Dwelt with eternal summer, ill-con-  
 tent.

For one, the youngest, hardly more  
 than boy,  
 Murt in that night of sudden ruin and  
 wreck,  
 Lay lingering out a five-years' death-  
 in-life.  
 They could not leave him. After he  
 was gone,  
 The two remaining found a fallen stem ;  
 And Enoch's comrade, careless of him-  
 self,  
 Fire-hollowing this in Indian fashion,  
 fell  
 Sun-stricken, and that other lived  
 alone.

In those two deaths he read God's  
 warning " wait."

The mountain wooded to the peak,  
 the lawus  
 And winding glades high up like ways  
 to Heaven,  
 The slender coco's drooping crown of  
 plumes,  
 The lightning flash of insect and of  
 bird,  
 The lustre of the long convolvuluses  
 That coil'd around the stately stems,  
 and ran  
 Ev'n to the limit of the land, the  
 glows  
 And glories of the broad belt of the  
 world,  
 All these he saw ; but what he fain had  
 seen  
 He could not see, the kindly human  
 face,  
 Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but heard  
 The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-  
 fowl,  
 The league-long roller thundering on  
 the reef,  
 The moving whisper of huge trees that  
 branch'd  
 And blossom'd in the zenith, or the  
 sweep  
 Of some precipitous rivulet to the  
 wave,  
 As down the shore he ranged, or all  
 day long  
 Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,  
 A shipwreck'd sailor, waiting for a  
 sail :  
 No sail from day to day, but every  
 day  
 The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts  
 Among the palms and ferns and preci-  
 pices ;  
 The blaze upon the waters to the east ;  
 The blaze upon his island overhead ;  
 The blaze upon the waters to the west ;  
 Then the great stars that globed them-  
 selves in Heaven,  
 The hollow-bellowing ocean, and  
 again  
 The scarlet shafts of sunrise — but no  
 sail.

There often as he watch'd or seem'd  
 to watch,  
 So still, the golden lizard on him  
 paused,  
 A phantom made of many phantoms  
 moved  
 Before him haunting him, or he him-  
 self  
 Moved haunting people, things and  
 places, known  
 Far in a darker isle beyond the line ;  
 The babes, their babble, Annie, the  
 small house,  
 The climbing street, the mill, the leafy  
 lanes,  
 The peacock-yewtree and the lone  
 Hall,





The horse he drove, the boat he sold,  
the chill  
November dawns and dewy-glooming  
downs,  
The gentle shower, the smell of dying  
leaves,  
And the low moan of leaden-color'd  
seas.

Once likewise, in the ringing of his  
ears,  
Tho' faintly, merrily — far and far  
away —  
He heard the pealing of his parish  
bells;  
Then, tho' he knew not wherefore,  
started up  
Shuddering, and when the beauteous  
hateful isle  
Return'd upon him, had not his poor  
heart  
Spoken with That, which being every-  
where  
Lets none, who speaks with Him, seem  
all alone,  
Surely the man had died of solitude.

Thus over Enoch's early-silvering  
head  
The sunny and rainy seasons came and  
went  
Year after year. His hopes to see his  
own,  
And pace the sacred old familiar fields,  
Not yet had perish'd, when his lonely  
doom  
Came suddenly to an end. Another  
ship  
(She wanted water) blown by baffling  
winds,  
Like the Good Fortune, from her des-  
tined course,  
Stay'd by this isle, not knowing where  
she lay:  
For since the mate had seen at early  
dawn  
Across a break on the mist-wreathen  
isle  
The silent water slipping from the  
hills,  
They sent a crew that landing burst  
away  
In search of stream or fount, and fill'd  
the shores  
With clamor. Downward from his  
mountain gorge  
Stept the long-hair'd long-bearded soli-  
tary,  
Brown, looking hardly human, strange-  
ly clad,  
Muttering and mumbling, idiot like it  
seem'd,  
With inarticulate rage, and making  
signs  
They knew not what: and yet he led  
the way  
To where the rivulets of sweet water  
ran;  
And ever as he mingled with the crew,  
And heard them talking, his long-  
bounden tongue,

Was loosen'd, till he made them un-  
derstand;  
Whom, when their casks were fill'd  
they took aboard:  
And there the tale he utter'd broken-  
ly,  
Scarce-credited at first but more and  
more,  
Amazed and melted all who listen'd  
to it:  
And clothes they gave him and free  
passage home;  
But oft he work'd among the rest and  
shook  
His isolation from him. None of these  
Came from his county, or could answer  
him,  
If question'd, aught of what he cared  
to know.  
And dull the voyage was with long  
delays,  
The vessel scarce sea-worthy; but  
evermore  
His fancy fled before the lazy wind  
Returning, till beneath a clouded  
moon  
He like a lover down thro' all his blood  
Drew in the dewy meadowy morning  
breath  
Of England, blown across her ghostly  
wall:  
And that same morning officers and  
men  
Levied a kindly tax upon themselves,  
Pitying the lonely man, and gave him  
it:  
Then moving up the coast they landed  
hirc,  
Ev'n in that harbor whence he sail'd  
before.

There Enoch spoke no word to any  
one,  
But homeward — home — what home?  
had he a home?  
His home, he walk'd. Bright was that  
afternoon,  
Sunny but chill; till drawn thro' either  
chasm,  
Where either havens open'd on the  
deeps,  
Roll'd a sea-haze and whelm'd the  
world in gray;  
Cut off the length of highway on be-  
fore,  
And left but narrow breadth to left and  
right  
Of wither'd holt or tilth or pasturage.  
On the nigh-naked tree the Robin  
piped  
Disconsolate, and thro' the dripping  
haze  
The dead weight of the dead leaf bore  
it down:  
Thicker the drizzle grew, deeper the  
gloom;  
Last, as it seem'd, a great mist-blotted  
light  
Flared on him, and he came upon the  
place.

Then down the long street having  
 slowly stolen,  
 His heart foreshadowing all calamity,  
 His eyes upon the stones, he reach'd  
 the home  
 Where Annie lived and loved him, and  
 his babes  
 In those far-off seven happy years  
 were born;  
 But finding neither light nor murmur  
 there  
 (A bill of sale gleam'd thro' the driz-  
 zle) crept  
 Still downward thinking "dead or dead  
 to me!"

Down to the pool and narrow wharf  
 he went,  
 Seeking a tavern which of old he  
 knew,  
 A front of timber-crost antiquity,  
 So propt, worm-eaten, ruinously old,  
 He thought it must have gone; but he  
 was gone  
 Who kept it; and his widow, Miriam  
 Lane,  
 With daily-dwindling profits held the  
 house;  
 A haunt of brawling seamen once, but  
 now  
 Still, with yet a bed for wandering  
 men.

There Enoch rested silent many days.  
 But Miriam Lane was good and gar-  
 rulous,  
 Nor let him be, but often breaking in,  
 Told him, with other annals of the  
 port,  
 Not knowing—Enoch was so brown,  
 so bow'd,  
 So broken—all the story of his house.  
 His baby's death, her growing poverty,  
 How Philip put her little ones to  
 school,  
 And kept them in it, his long wooing  
 her,  
 Her slow consent, and marriage, and  
 the birth  
 Of Philip's child: and o'er his counte-  
 nance  
 No shadow past, nor motion: anyone,  
 Regarding, well had deem'd he felt the  
 tale  
 Less than the teller: only when she  
 closed  
 "Enoch, poor man, was cast away and  
 lost!"  
 He, shaking his gray head pathetically,  
 Repeated muttering "cast away and  
 lost;"  
 Again in deeper inward whispers  
 "lost!"

But Enoch yearn'd to see her face  
 again;  
 "If I might look on her sweet face  
 again  
 And know that she is happy." So the  
 thought  
 Haunted and harass'd him, and drove  
 him forth..

At evening when the dull November  
 day  
 Was growing duller twilight, to the  
 hill.  
 There he sat down gazing on all be-  
 low;  
 There did a thousand memories roll  
 upon him,  
 Unspeakable for sadness. By and by  
 The ruddy square of comfortable light,  
 Far-blazing from the rear of Philip's  
 house,  
 Allured him, as the beacon-blaze al-  
 lures  
 The bird of passage, till he madly  
 strikes  
 Against it, and beats out his weary life.

For Philip's dwelling fronted on the  
 street,  
 The latest house to landward; but be-  
 hind,  
 With one small gate that open'd on the  
 waste,  
 Flourish'd a little garden square and  
 wall'd:  
 And in it throve an ancient evergreen,  
 A yewtree, and all round it ran a walk  
 Of shingle, and a walk divided it:  
 But Enoch shunn'd the middle walk  
 and stole  
 Up by the wall, behind the yew; and  
 thence  
 That which he better might have  
 shunn'd, if griefs  
 Like his have worse or better, Enoch  
 saw.

For cups and silver on the burnish'd  
 board  
 Sparkled and shone; so genial was the  
 hearth:  
 And on the right hand of the hearth  
 he saw  
 Philip, the slighted suitor of old times,  
 Stout, rosy, with his babe across his  
 knees,  
 And o'er her second father stoopt a  
 girl,  
 A later but a loftier Annie Lee,  
 Fair-hair'd and tall, and from her lift-  
 ed hand  
 Dangled a length of ribbon and a ring  
 To tempt the babe, who rear'd his  
 creasy arms,  
 Caught at and ever miss'd it, and they  
 laugh'd:  
 And on the left hand of the hearth he  
 saw  
 The mother glancing often toward her  
 babe,  
 But turning now and then to speak  
 with him,  
 Her son, who stood beside her tall and  
 strong,  
 And saying that which pleased him, for  
 he smiled.

Now when the dead man come to life  
 beheld  
 His wife his wife no more, and saw the  
 babe

Hers, yet not his, upon the father's  
knee,  
And all the warmth, the peace, the  
happiness,  
And his own children tall and beauti-  
ful,  
And him, that other, reigning in his  
place,  
Lord of his rights and of his children's  
love,—  
Then he, tho' Miriam Lane had told  
him all,  
Because things seen are mightier than  
things heard,  
Stagger'd and shook, holding the  
branch, and fear'd  
To send abroad a shrill and terrible  
cry,  
Which in one moment; like the blast  
of doom,  
Would shatter all the happiness of the  
hearth.

He therefore turning softly like a  
thief,  
Lest the harsh shingle should grate  
underfoot,  
And feeling all along the garden-wall,  
Lest he should swoon and tumble and  
be found,  
Crept to the gate, and open'd it, and  
closed,  
As lightly as a sick man's chamber-  
door,  
Behind him, and came out upon the  
waste.

And there he would have knelt, but  
that his knees  
Were feeble, so that falling prone he  
dug  
His fingers into the wet earth, and  
pray'd.

"Too hard to bear! why did they  
take me thence?  
O God Almighty, blessed Saviour,  
Thou  
That didst uphold me on my lonely  
isle,  
Uphold me, Father, in my loneliness  
A little longer! aid me, give me  
strength  
Not to tell her, never to let her know,  
Help me not to break in upon her  
peace.  
My children too! must I not speak to  
these?  
They know me not. I should betray  
myself.  
Never: no father's kiss for me—the  
girl  
So like her mother, and the boy, my  
son."

There speech and thought and nature  
fail'd a little,  
And he lay tranced; but when he rose  
and paced  
Back toward his solitary home again,

All down the long and narrow street he  
went  
Beating it in upon his weary brain,  
As tho' it were the burden of a song,  
"Not to tell her, never to let her  
know."

He was not all unhappy. His resolve  
Uphore him, and firm faith, and ever-  
more  
Prayer from a living source within the  
will,  
And beating up thro' all the bitter  
world,  
Like fountains of sweet water in the  
sea,  
Kept him a living soul. "This miller's  
wife"  
He said to Miriam "that you told me  
of,  
Has she no fear that her first husband  
lives?"  
"Ay, ay, poor soul" said Miriam,  
"fear enow!  
If you could tell her you had seen him  
dead,  
Why, that would be her comfort;"  
and he thought  
"After the Lord has call'd me she  
shall know,  
I wait His time" and Enoch set himself  
Scorning an alms, to work whereby to  
live.  
Almost to all things could he turn his  
hand.  
Cooper he was and carpenter, and  
wrought  
To make the boatmen fishing-nets, or  
help'd  
At lading and unlading the tall barks,  
That brought the stunted commerce of  
those days;  
Thus earn'd a scanty living for him-  
self:  
Yet since he did but labor for himself,  
Work without hope, there was not life  
in it  
Whereby the man could live; and as  
the year  
Roll'd itself round again to meet the  
day  
When Enoch had return'd, a languor  
came  
Upon him, gentle sickness, gradually  
Weakening the man, till he could do  
no more,  
But kept the house, his chair, and last  
his bed.  
And Enoch bore his weakness cheer-  
fully.  
For sure no gladlier does the stranded  
wreck  
See thro' the gray skirts of a lifting  
squall  
The boat that bears the hope of life  
approach  
To save the life despair'd of, than he  
saw  
Death dawning on him, and the close  
of all.

For thro' that dawning gleam'd a  
kindlier hope  
On Enoch thinking "after I am gone,  
Then may she learn I loved her to the  
last."

He call'd aloud for Miriam Lane and  
said

"Woman, I have a secret—only swear,  
Before I tell you—swear upon the book  
Not to reveal it, till you see me dead."

"Dead" clamor'd the good woman  
"hear him talk !

I warrant, man, that we shall bring  
you round."

"Swear" added Enoch sternly "on  
the book."

And on the book, half-frighted, Miriam  
swore.

Then Enoch rolling his gray eyes upon  
her,

"Did you know Enoch Arden of this  
town ?"

"Know him?" she said "I knew him  
far away.

Ay, ay, I mind him coming down the  
street ;

Held his head high, and cared for no  
man, he."

Slowly and sadly Enoch answer'd her ;  
"His head is low, and no man cares  
for him.

I think I have not three days more to  
live ;

I am the man." At which the woman  
gave

A half-incredulous, half-hysterical cry.  
"You Arden, you ! nay, —sure he was  
a foot

Higher than you be." Enoch said again  
"My God has bow'd me down to what  
I am ;

My grief and solitude have broken  
me ;

Nevertheless, know you that I am he  
Who married—but that name has  
twice been changed —

I married her who married Philip Ray.  
Sit, listen." Then he told her of his  
voyage,

His wreck, his lonely life, his coming  
back,

His gazing in on Annie, his resolve.  
And how he kept it. As the woman  
heard,

Fast flow'd the current of her easy  
tears,

While in her heart she yearn'd inces-  
santly

To rush abroad all round the little  
haven,

Proclaiming Enoch Arden and his  
woes ;

But awed and promise-bounden she  
forbore,

Saying only "See your bairns before  
you go !

Eh, let me fetch 'em, Arden," and  
arose

Eager to bring them down, for Enoch  
hung

A moment on her words, but then re-  
plied.

"Woman, disturb me not now at the  
last,

But let me hold my purpose till I die.  
Sit down again ; mark me and under-  
stand,

While I have power to speak. I charge  
you now,

When you shall see her, tell her that I  
died

Blessing her, praying for her, loving  
her ;

Save for the bar between us, loving  
her

As when she laid her head beside my  
own.

And tell my daughter Annie, whom I  
saw

So like her mother, that my latest  
breath

Was spent in blessing her and praying  
for her.

And tell my son that I died blessing  
him.

And say to Philip that I blest him too ;  
He never meant us anything but good.

But if my children care to see me  
dead,

Who hardly knew me living, let them  
come,

I am their father ; but she must not  
come,

For my dead face would vex her after-  
life.

And now there is but one of all my  
blood

Who will embrace me in the world-to-  
be :

This hair is his : she cut it off and gave  
it,

And I have borne it with me all these  
years,

And thought to bear it with me to my  
grave ;

But now my mind is changed, for I  
shall see him,

My babe in bliss : wherefore when I  
am gone,

Take, give her this, for it may comfort  
her :

It will moreover be a token to her,  
That I am he."

He ceased ; and Miriam Lane  
Made such a voluble answer promising  
all,

That once again he roll'd his eyes upon  
her

Repeating all he wish'd, and once again  
she promised.

Then the third night after this,  
While Enoch slumber'd motionless  
and pale,

And Miriam watch'd and dozed at in-  
tervals,

There came so loud a calling of the  
sea,

That all the houses in the haven rang

He woke, he rose, he spread his arms  
abroad  
Crying with a loud voice "a sail! a  
sail!  
I am saved;" and so fell back and  
spoke no more.

So past the strong heroic soul away.  
And when they buried him the little  
port  
Had seldom seen a costlier funeral.

AYLMER'S FIELD.

1793.

DUST are our frames; and, gilded  
dust, our pride  
Looks only for a moment whole and  
sound;  
Like that long-buried body of the  
king,  
Found lying with his urns and orna-  
ments,  
Which at a touch of light, an air of  
heaven,  
Slipt into ashes and was found no  
more.

Here is a story which in rougher  
shape  
Came from a grizzled cripple, whom I  
saw  
Sunning himself in a waste field  
alone—  
Old, and a mine of memories—who had  
served,  
Long since, a bygone Rector of the  
place,  
And been himself a part of what he  
told.

SIR AYLMER AYLMER that almighty  
man,  
The county God—in whose capacious  
hall,  
Hung with a hundred shields, the  
family tree  
Sprang from the midriff of a prostrate  
king—  
Whose blazing wyvern weathercock'd  
the spire,  
Stood from his walls and wing'd his  
entry-gates  
And swang besides on many a windy  
sign—  
Whose eyes from under a pyramidal  
head  
Saw from his windows nothing save  
his own—  
What lovelier of his own had he than  
her,  
His only child, his Edith, whom he  
loved  
As heiress and not heir regretfully?  
But "he that marries her marries her  
name"

This flat somewhat soothed himself  
and wife,  
His wife a faded beauty of the Baths,  
Inspid as the Queen upon a card;  
Her all of thought and bearing hardly  
more  
Than his own shadow in a sickly sun.

A land of hops and poppy-mingled  
corn,  
Little about it stirring save a brook!  
A sleepy land where under the same  
wheel  
The same old rut would deepen year  
by year;  
Where almost all the village had one  
name;  
Where Aylmer follow'd Aylmer at the  
Hall  
And Averill Averill at the Rectory  
Thrice over; so that Rectory and Hall,  
Bound in an immemorial intimacy,  
Were open to each other; tho' to  
dream  
That Love could bind them closer well  
had made  
The hoar hair of the Baronet bristle up  
With horror, worse than had he heard  
his priest  
Preach an inverted scripture, sons of  
men  
Daughters of God; so sleepy was the  
land.

And might not Averill, had he will'd  
it so,  
Somewhere beneath his own low range  
of roofs,  
Have also set his many-shielded tree?  
There was an Aylmer-Averill marriage  
once,  
When the red rose was redder than it-  
self,  
And York's white rose as red as Lan-  
caster's,  
With wounded peace which each had  
prick'd to death.  
"Not proven" Averill said, or laugh-  
ingly  
"Some other race of Averills"—  
prov'n or no,  
What cared he? what, if other or the  
same?  
He lean'd not on his fathers but him-  
self.  
But Leolin, his brother, living oft  
With Averill, and a year or two before  
Call'd to the bar, but ever call'd away  
By one low voice to one dear neighbor-  
hood,  
Would often, in his walks with Edith,  
claim  
A distant kinship to the gracious  
blood  
That shook the heart of Edith hearing  
him.

Sanguine he was: a but less vivid  
hue

Than of that islet in the chestnut-  
 bloom  
 Flamed in his cheek ; and eager eyes,  
 that still  
 Took joyful note of all things joyful,  
 beam'd,  
 Beneath a manelike mass of rolling  
 gold,  
 Their best and brightest, when they  
 dwelt on hers,  
 Edith, whose pensive beauty, perfect  
 else,  
 But subject to the season or the mood,  
 Shone like a mystic star between the  
 less  
 And greater glory varying to and fro,  
 We know not wherefore ; bounteously  
 made,  
 And yet so finely, that a troublous  
 touch  
 Thinn'd, or would seem to thin her in  
 a day,  
 A joyous to dilate, as toward the  
 light.  
 And these had been together from the  
 first.  
 Leolin's first nurse was, five years af-  
 ter, hers :  
 So much the boy foreran ; but when  
 his date  
 Doubled her own, for want of play-  
 mates, he  
 (Since Averill was a decade and a  
 half  
 His elder, and their parents under-  
 ground)  
 Had tost his ball and flown his kite,  
 and roll'd  
 His hoop to pleasure Edith, with her  
 dipt  
 Against the rush of the air in the prone  
 swing,  
 Made blossom-ball or daisy-chain, ar-  
 ranged  
 Her garden, sow'd her name and kept  
 it green  
 In living letters, told her fairy-tales,  
 Show'd her the fairy footings on the  
 grass,  
 The little dells of cowslip, fairy palms,  
 The petty mare's tail forest, fairy pines,  
 Or from the tiny pitted target blew  
 What look'd a flight of fairy arrows  
 aim'd  
 All at one mark, all hitting : make-be-  
 lieves  
 For Edith and himself : or else he  
 forged,  
 But that was later, boyish histories  
 Of battle, bold adventure, dungeon,  
 wreck,  
 Flights, terrors, sudden rescues, and  
 true love  
 Crown'd after trial ; sketches rude and  
 faint,  
 But where a passion yet unborn per-  
 haps  
 Lay hidden as the music of the moon  
 Sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightin-  
 gale.

And thus together, save for college  
 times  
 Or Temple-eaten terms, a couple, fair  
 As ever painter painted, poet sang,  
 Or Heav'n in lavish bounty moulded,  
 grew.  
 And more and more, the maiden  
 woman-grown,  
 He wasted hours with Averill ; there,  
 when first  
 The tented winter-field was broken up  
 Into that phalanx of the summer  
 spears  
 That soon should wear the garland ;  
 there again  
 When burr and bine were gather'd ;  
 lastly there  
 At Christmas ; ever welcome at the  
 Hall,  
 On whose dull sameness his full tide of  
 youth  
 Broke with a phosphorescence cheer-  
 ing even  
 My lady ; and the Baronet yet had laid  
 No bar between them : dull and self-  
 involved,  
 Tall and erect, but bending from his  
 height  
 With half-allowing smiles for all the  
 world,  
 And mighty courteous in the main—  
 his pride  
 Lay deeper than to wear it as his  
 ring—  
 He, like an Aylmer in his Aylmerism,  
 Would care no more for Leolin's walk-  
 ing with her  
 Than for his old Newfoundland's,  
 when they ran  
 To loose him at the stables, for he rose  
 Twofooted at the limit of his chain,  
 Roaring to make a third : and how  
 should Love,  
 Whom the cross-lightnings of four  
 chance-met eyes  
 Flash into fiery life from nothing, fol-  
 low  
 Such dear familiarities of dawn ?  
 Seldom, but when he does, Master of  
 all.

So these young hearts not knowing  
 that they loved,  
 Not she at least, nor conscious of a  
 bar  
 Between them, nor by plight or broken  
 ring  
 Bound, but an immemorial intimacy,  
 Wander'd at will, but oft accompanied  
 By Averill : his, a brother's love, that  
 hung  
 With wings of brooding shelter o'er  
 her peace,  
 Might have been other, save for Leo-  
 lin's—  
 Who knows ? but so they wander'd,  
 hour by hour  
 Gather'd the blossom that rebloom'd,  
 and drank  
 The magic cup that fill'd itself anew.

A whisper half reveal'd her to herself.  
 For out beyond her lodges, where the brook  
 Vocal, with here and there a silence, ran  
 By sallowy rims, arose the laborers' homes,  
 A frequent haunt of Edith, on low knolls  
 That dimpling died into each other, butts,  
 At random scatter'd, each a nest in bloom.  
 Her art, her hand, her counsel all had wrought  
 About them; here was one that, summer-blanch'd,  
 Was parcel-bearded with the traveler's joy  
 In autumn, parcel ivy-clad; and here  
 The warm-blue breathings of a hidden heart  
 Broke from a bower of vine and honey-suckle:  
 One look'd all rosetree, and another wore  
 A close-set robe of jasmine sown with stars:  
 This had a rosy sea of gillyflowers  
 About it; this, a milky-way on earth,  
 Like visions in the Northern dreamer's heavens,  
 A lily-avenue climbing to the doors;  
 One, almost to the martin-haunted eaves  
 A summer burial deep in hollyhocks;  
 Each, its own charm; and Edith's everywhere:  
 And Edith ever visitant with him,  
 He but less loved than Edith, of her poor:  
 For she—so slowly-lovely and so loving,  
 Queenly responsive when the loyal hand  
 Rose from the clay it work'd in as she past,  
 Not sowing hedgerow texts and passing by,  
 Nor dealing goodly counsel from a height  
 That makes the lowest hate it, but a voice  
 Of comfort and an open hand of help,  
 A splendid presence flattering the poor roofs  
 Revered as theirs, but kindlier than themselves  
 To ailing wife or wailing infancy  
 Or old bedridden palsy,—was adored;  
 He, loved for her and for himself. A grasp  
 Having the warmth and muscles of the heart,  
 A childly way with children, and a laugh  
 Ringing like proven golden coinage true,  
 Were no false passport to that easy realm,

Where once with Leolin at her side,  
 the girl,  
 Nursing a child, and turning to the warmth  
 The tender pink five-beaded baby-soles,  
 Heard the good mother softly whisper  
 "Bless,  
 God bless 'em: marriages are made in Heaven."

A flash of semi-jealousy clear'd it to her.  
 My lady's Indian kinsman unannounced  
 With half a score of swarthy faces came.  
 His own, tho' keen and bold and soldierly,  
 Sear'd by the close ecliptic, was not fair;  
 Fairer his talk, a tongue that ruled the hour,  
 Tho' seeming boastful: so when first he dash'd  
 Into the chronicle of a deedful day,  
 Sir Aylmer half forgot his lazy smile  
 Of patron "Good! my lady's kinsman! good!"  
 My lady with her fingers interlock'd,  
 And rotatory thumbs on silken knees,  
 Call'd all her vital spirits into each ear  
 To listen: unawares they flitted off,  
 Busying themselves about the flower-age  
 That stood from out a stiff brocade in which,  
 The meteor of a splendid season, she,  
 Once with this kinsman, ah so long ago.  
 Stept thro' the stately minuet of those days:  
 But Edith's eager fancy hurried with him  
 Snatch'd thro' the perilous passes of his life:  
 Till Leolin ever watchful of her eye  
 Hated him with a momentary hate.  
 Wife-hunting, as the rumor ran, was he:  
 I know not, for he spoke not, only shower'd  
 His oriental gifts on every one  
 And most on Edith: like a storm he came,  
 And shook the house, and like a storm he went.  
 Among the gifts he left her (possibly  
 He flow'd and ebb'd uncertain, to return  
 When others had been tested) there was one.  
 A dagger, in rich sheath with jewels on it  
 Sprinkled about in gold that branch'd itself  
 Fine as ice-ferns on January panes  
 Made by a breath. I know not when at first,

Nor of what race, the work ; but as he told  
 The story, storming a hill-fort of thieves  
 He got it ; for their captain after fight,  
 His comrades having fought their last below,  
 Was climbing up the valley ; at whom he shot :  
 Down from the beetling crag to which he clung  
 Tumbled the tawny rascal at his feet.  
 This dagger with him, which when now admired  
 By Edith whom his pleasure was to please,  
 At once the costly Sabib yielded to her.

And Leolin, coming after he was gone,  
 Tost over all her presents petulantly :  
 And when she show'd the wealthy scabbard, saying  
 "Look what a lovely piece of workmanship !"  
 Slight was his answer "Well—I care not for it ;"  
 Then playing with the blade he prick'd his hand,  
 "A gracious gift to give a lady, this !"  
 "But would it be more gracious" ask'd the girl  
 "Were I to give this gift of his to one  
 That is no lady ?" "Gracious ? No" said he.  
 "Me ?—but I cared not for it. O pardon me,  
 I seem to be ungraciousness itself."  
 "Take it" she added sweetly "tho' his gift ;  
 For I am more ungracious ev'n than you,  
 I care not for it either ;" and he said  
 "Why then I love it ;" but Sir Aylmer past,  
 And neither loved nor liked the thing he heard.

The next day came a neighbor.  
 Blues and reds  
 They talk'd of : blues were sure of it, he thought :  
 Then of the latest fox—where started—kill'd  
 In such a bottom : "Peter had the brush,  
 My Peter, first ;" and did Sir Aylmer know  
 That great pock-pitten fellow had been caught ?  
 Then made his pleasure echo, hand to hand,  
 And rolling as it were the substance of it  
 Between his palms a moment up and down—  
 "The birds were warm, the birds were warm upon him ;  
 We have him now ;" and had Sir Aylmer heard—

Nay, but he must—the land was ringing of it—  
 This blacksmith-border marriage—one they knew—  
 Raw from the nursery—who could trust a child ?  
 That cursed France with her egalities !  
 And did Sir Aylmer (deferentially With nearing chair and lower'd accent) think—  
 For people talk'd—that it was wholly wise  
 To let that handsome fellow Averill walk  
 So freely with his daughter ? people talk'd—  
 The boy might get a notion into him ;  
 The girl might be entangled ere she knew.  
 Sir Aylmer Aylmer slowly stiffening spoke :  
 "The girl and boy, Sir, know their differences !"  
 "Good" said his friend "but watch !" and he "enough,  
 More than enough, Sir ! I can guard my own."  
 They parted, and Sir Aylmer Aylmer watch'd.

Pale, for on her the thunders of the house  
 Had fallen first, was Edith that same night ;  
 Pale as the Jephtha's daughter, a rough piece  
 Of early rigid color, under which  
 Withdrawing by the counter door to that  
 Which Leolin open'd, she cast back upon him  
 A piteous glance, and vanish'd. He, as one  
 Caught in a burst of unexpected storm,  
 And pelted with outrageous epithets,  
 Turning beheld the Powers of the House  
 On either side the hearth, indignant ;  
 her,  
 Cooling her false cheek with a feather-fan,  
 Him glaring, by his own stale devil spurr'd,  
 And, like a beast hard-ridden, breathing hard.  
 "Ungenerous, dishonorable, base, Presumptuous ! trusted as he was with her,  
 The sole succeder to their wealth, their lands,  
 The last remaining pillar of their house,  
 The one transmitter of their ancient name,  
 Their child," "Our child !" "Our heiress !" "Ours !" for still,  
 Like echoes from beyond a hollow, came  
 Her sicklier iteration. Last he said

"Boy, mark me ! for your fortunes are  
to make.  
I swear you shall not make them out  
or mine.  
Now inasmuch as you have practised  
on her,  
Perplexed her, made her half forget her-  
self,  
Swerve from her duty to herself and  
us—  
Things in an Aylmer deem'd impossi-  
ble,  
Far as we track ourselves—I say that  
this—  
Else I withdraw favor and countenance  
From you and yours forever—shall you  
do.  
Sir, when you see her—but you shall  
not see her—  
No, you shall write, and not to her, but  
me:  
And you shall say that having spoken  
with me,  
And after look'd into yourself, you  
find  
That you meant nothing—as indeed  
you know  
That you meant nothing. Such a match  
as this !  
Impossible, prodigious !" These were  
words,  
As meted by his measure of himself,  
Arguing boundless forbearance : after  
which,  
And Leolin's horror-stricken answer,  
" I  
So foul a traitor to myself and her,  
Never O never," for about as long  
As the wind-hover hangs in balance,  
paused  
Sir Aylmer reddening from the storm  
within,  
Then broke all bonds of courtesy, and  
crying  
" Boy, should I find you by my doors  
again,  
My men shall lash you from them like  
a dog ;  
Hence !" with a sudden execration  
drove  
The footstool from before him, and  
arose ;  
So, stammering " scoundrel " out of  
teeth that ground  
As in a dreadful dream, while Leolin  
still  
Retreated half-aghast, the fierce old  
man  
Follow'd, and under his own lintel  
stood  
Storming with lifted hands, a hoary  
face  
Meet for the reverence of the hearth,  
but now,  
Beneath a pale and unimpassion'd  
moon, [form'd.  
Vext with unworthy madness, and de-  
  
Slowly and conscious of the raging  
eye

That watch'd him, till he heard the  
ponderous door  
Close, crashing with long echoes thro'  
the land,  
Went Leolin ; then, his passions all in  
flood  
And masters of his motion, furiously  
Down thro' the bright lawns to his  
brother's ran,  
And foam'd away his heart at Averill's  
ear :  
Whom Averill solaced as he might,  
amazed :  
The man was his, had been his father's  
friend :  
He must have seen, himself had seen  
it long :  
He must have known, himself had  
known : besides,  
He never yet had set his daughter  
forth  
Here in the woman-markets of the  
west,  
Where our Caucasians let themselves  
be sold.  
Some one, he thought, had slander'd  
Leolin to him.  
" Brother, for I have loved you more  
as son  
Than brother, let me tell you : I my-  
self—  
What is their pretty saying ? jilted,  
is it ?  
Jilted I was : I say it for your peace.  
Pain'd, and, as bearing in myself the  
shame  
The woman should have borne, humili-  
ated,  
I lived for years a stunted sunless life ;  
Till after our good parents past away  
Watching your growth, I seem'd again  
to grow.  
Leolin, I almost sin in envying you :  
The very whitest lamb in all my fold  
Loves you : I know her : the worst  
thought she has  
Is whiter even than her pretty hand :  
She must prove true : for, brother,  
where two fight  
The strongest wins, and truth and love  
are strength,  
And you are happy : let her parents  
be."

But Leolin cried out the more upon  
them—  
Insolent, brainless, heartless ! heiress,  
wealth,  
Their wealth, their heiress ! wealth  
enough was theirs  
For twenty matches. Were he lord of  
this,  
Why twenty boys and girls should  
marry on it,  
And forty blest ones bless him, and  
himself  
Be wealthy still, ay wealthier. He  
believed  
This filthy marriage-hindering Mam-  
mon made

The harlot of the cities : nature crost  
 Was mother of the foul adulteries  
 That saturate soul with body. Name,  
 too ! name,  
 Their ancient name ! they *might* be  
 proud ; its worth  
 Was being Edith's. Ah how pale she  
 had look'd  
 Darling, to-night ! they must have  
 rated her  
 Beyond all tolerance. These old pheas-  
 ant-lords,  
 These partridge-breeders of a thousand  
 years,  
 Who had mildew'd in their thousands,  
 doing nothing  
 Since Egbert—why, the greater their  
 disgrace !  
 Fall back upon a name ! rest, rot in  
 that !  
 Not *keep* it noble, make it nobler ?  
 fools,  
 With such a vantage-ground for noble-  
 ness !  
 He had known a man, a quintessence  
 of man,  
 The life of all—who madly loved—and  
 le,  
 Thwarted by one of these old father-  
 fools,  
 Had rioted his life out, and made an  
 end.  
 He would not do it ! her sweet face  
 and faith  
 Held him from that ; but he had pow-  
 ers, he knew it :  
 Back would he to his studies, make a  
 name,  
 Name, fortune too : the world should  
 ring of him  
 To shame these mouldy Aylmers in  
 their graves :  
 Chancellor, or what is greatest would  
 he be—  
 " O brother, I am grieved to learn your  
 grief—  
 Give me my fling, and let me say my  
 say."

At which, like one that sees his own  
 excess,  
 And easily forgives it as his own,  
 He laugh'd ; and then was mute ; but  
 presently  
 Wept like a storm : and honest Averill  
 seeing  
 How low his brother's mood had fallen,  
 fetch'd  
 His richest beeswing from a bin reserved  
 For banquets, praised the waning red,  
 and told  
 The vintage—when *this* Aylmer came  
 of age—  
 Then drank and past it ; till at length  
 the two,  
 Tho' Leolin flamed and fell again,  
 agreed  
 That much allowance must be made  
 for men.

After an angry dream this kindler glow  
 Faded with morning, but his purpose  
 held.

Yet once by night again the lovers  
 met,  
 A perilous meeting under the tall  
 pines  
 That darken'd all the northward of  
 her Hall.  
 Him, to her meek and modest bosom  
 prest  
 In agony, she promised that no force,  
 Persuasion, no, nor death could alter  
 her :

He, passionately hopefuller, would go,  
 Labor for his own Edith, and return  
 In such a sunlight of prosperity  
 He should not be rejected. " Write to  
 me !

They loved me, and because I love  
 their child

They hate me : there is war between  
 us, dear,

Which breaks all bonds but ours ; we  
 must remain

Sacred to one another." So they talk'd,  
 Poor children, for their comfort : the  
 wind blew ;

The rain of heaven, and their own bit-  
 ter tears,

Tears, and the careless rain of heaven,  
 mixt

Upon their faces, as they kiss'd each  
 other

In darkness, and above them roar'd  
 the pine.

So Leolin went ; and as we task  
 ourselves

To learn a language known but smat-  
 teringly

In phrases here and there at random,  
 toil'd

Mastering the lawless science of our  
 law,

That codeless myriad of precedent,  
 That wilderness of single instances,

Thro' which a few, by wit or fortune  
 led,

May beat a pathway out to wealth and  
 fame.

The jests, that flash'd about the plead-  
 er's room,

Lightning of the hour, the pun, the  
 scurrilous tale,—

Old scandals buried now seven de-  
 cades deep

In other scandals that have lived and  
 died,

And left the living scandal that shall  
 die—

Were dead to him already ; bent as he  
 was

To make disproof of scorn, and strong  
 in hopes,

And prodigal of all brain-labor he,  
 Charier of sleep, and wine, and exer-  
 cise,

Except when for a breathing-while at  
 eve,

Some niggard fraction of an hour, he  
ran  
Beside the river-bank : and then in-  
deed  
Harder the times were, and the hands  
of power  
Were bloodier, and the according  
hearts of men  
Seem'd harder too ; but the soft river-  
breeze,  
Which fann'd the gardens of that rival  
rose  
Yet fragrant in a heart remembering  
His former talks with Edith, on him  
breathed  
Far purer in his rushings to and fro,  
After his books, to flush his blood with  
air.  
Then to his books again. My lady's  
cousin,  
Half-sickening of his pension'd after-  
noon,  
Drove in upon the student once or  
twice.  
Ran a Malayan muck against the  
times,  
Had golden hopes for France and all  
mankind,  
Answer'd all queries touching those at  
home  
With a heaved shoulder and a saucy  
smile,  
And fain had haled him out into the  
world,  
And air'd him there : his nearer friend  
would say  
"Screw not the cord too sharply lest it  
snap."  
Then left alone he pluck'd her dagger  
forth  
From where his worldless heart had  
kept it warm,  
Kissing his vows upon it like a knight.  
And wrinkled benchers often talk'd of  
him  
Approvingly, and prophesied his rise :  
For heart, I think, help'd head ; her  
letters too,  
Tho' far between, and coming fitfully  
Like broken music, written as she  
found  
Or made occasion, being strictly  
watch'd,  
Charm'd him thro' every labyrinth till  
he saw  
An end, a hope, a light breaking upon  
him.

But they that cast her spirit into  
flesh,  
Her worldly-wise begetters, plagued  
themselves  
To sell her, those good parents, for her  
good.  
Whatever eldest-born of rank or  
wealth  
Might lie within their compass, him  
they lured  
Into their net made pleasant by the  
bait

Of gold and beauty, wooing him to woo.  
So month by month the noise about  
their doors,  
And distant blaze of those dull ban-  
quets, made  
The nightly wirer of their innocent  
hare  
Falter before he took it. All in vain.  
Sullen, defiant, pitying, wroth, return'd  
Leolin's rejected rivals from their suit  
So often, that the folly taking wings  
Slipt o'er those lazy limits down the  
wind  
With rumor, and became in other  
fields  
A mockery to the yeomen over ale,  
And laughter to their lords : but those  
at home,  
As hunters round a hunted creature  
draw  
The cordon close and closer toward  
the death,  
Narrow'd her goings out and comings  
in ;  
Forbade her first the house of Averill,  
Then closed her access to the wealthier  
farms,  
Last from her own home-circle of the  
poor  
They barr'd her : yet she bore it : yet  
her cheek  
Kept color : wondrous ! but, O mys-  
tery !  
What amulet drew her down to that  
old oak,  
So old, that twenty years before, a part  
Falling had let appear the brand of  
John—  
Once grovelike, each huge arm a tree,  
but now  
The broken base of a black tower, a  
cave  
Of touchwood, with a single flourishing  
spray.  
There the manorial lord too curiously  
Raking in that millennial touchwood-  
dust  
Found for himself a bitter treasure-  
trove ;  
Burst his own wyvern on the seal, and  
read  
Writhing a letter from his child, for  
which  
Came at the moment Leolin's emis-  
sary,  
A crippled lad, and coming turn'd to  
fly,  
But scared with threats of jail and  
halter gave  
To him that fluster'd his poor parish  
wits  
The letter which he brought, and swore  
besides  
To play their go-between as heretofore  
Nor let them know themselves be-  
tray'd ; and then,  
Soul stricken at their kindness to him,  
went  
Hating his own lean heart and miser-  
able.

Thenceforward oft from out a despot dream  
 The father panting woke, and oft, at dawn  
 Aroused the black republic on his elms,  
 Sweeping the frothfly from the fescue brush'd  
 Thro' the dim meadow toward his treasure-trove,  
 Seized it, took home, and to my lady,—who made  
 A downward crescent of her minion mouth,  
 Listless in all despondence,—read; and tore,  
 As if the living passion symbol'd there  
 Were living nerves to feel the rent; and burnt,  
 Now chafing at his own great self defied,  
 Now striking on huge stumbling-blocks of scorn  
 In babyisms, and dear diminutives  
 Scatter'd all over the vocabulary  
 Of such a love as like a chidden child,  
 After much wailing, hush'd itself at last  
 Hopeless of answer: then tho' Averill wrote  
 And bade him with good heart sustain himself—  
 All would be well—the lover heeded not,  
 But passionately restless came and went,  
 And rustling once at night about the place,  
 There by a keeper shot at, slightly hurt,  
 Raging return'd: nor was it well for her  
 Kept to the garden now, and grove of pines,  
 Watch'd even there; and one was set to watch  
 The watcher, and Sir Aylmer watch'd them all,  
 Yet bitterer from his readings: once indeed,  
 Warm'd with his wines, or taking pride in her,  
 She look'd so sweet, he kiss'd her tenderly  
 Not knowing what possess'd him: that one kiss  
 Was Leelin's one strong rival upon earth;  
 Seconded, for my lady follow'd suit,  
 Seem'd hope's returning rose: and then ensued  
 A Martin's summer of his faded love,  
 Or ordeal by kindness; after this  
 He seldom crost his child without a sneer;  
 The mother flow'd in shallower acrimony:  
 Never one kindly smile, one kindly word:  
 So that the gentle creature shut from

Her charitable use, and face to face  
 With twenty months of silence, slowly lost  
 Nor greatly cared to lose, her hold on life.  
 Last, some low fever ranging round the spy  
 The weakness of a people or a house,  
 Like flies that haunt a wound, or deer, or men,  
 Of almost all that is, hurting the hurt—  
 Save Christ as we believe him—found the girl  
 And flung her down upon a couch of fire,  
 Where careless of the household faces near,  
 And crying upon the name of Leolin,  
 She, and with her the race of Aylmer, past.

Star to star vibrates light: may soul to soul  
 Strike thro' a finer element of her own?  
 So,—from afar,—touch as at once? or why  
 That night, that moment, when she named his name,  
 Did the keen shriek “yes love, yes Edith, yes,”  
 Shriill, till the comrade of his chambers woke,  
 And came upon him half-arisen from sleep,  
 With a weird bright eye, sweating and trembling,  
 His hair as it were crackling into flames,  
 His body half flung forward in pursuit,  
 And his long arms stretch'd as to grasp a flyer:  
 Nor knew he wherefore he had made the cry;  
 And being much befool'd and idioted  
 By the rough amity of the other, sank  
 As into sleep again. The second day,  
 My lady's Indian kinsman rushing in,  
 A breaker of the bitter news from home,  
 Found a dead man, a letter edged with death  
 Beside him, and the dagger which himself  
 Gave Edith, reddened with no bandit's blood:  
 “From Edith” was engraven on the blade.

Then Averill went and gazed upon his death.  
 And when he came again, his flock believed—  
 Beholding how the years which are not Time's  
 Had blasted him—that many thousand days  
 Were clipt by horror from his term of life.  
 Yet the sad mother, for the second death

Scarce touch'd her thro' that nearness  
 of the first,  
 And being used to find her pastor  
 texts,  
 Sent to the harrow'd brother, praying  
 him  
 To speak before the people of her  
 child,  
 And fixt the Sabbath. Darkly that  
 day rose :  
 Autumn's mock sunshine of the faded  
 woods  
 Was all the life of it ; for hard on  
 these,  
 A breathless burden of low-folded  
 heavens  
 Stifled and chill'd at once ; but every  
 roof  
 Bent out a listener : many too had  
 known  
 Edith among the hamlets round, and  
 since  
 The parents' harshness and the hap-  
 less loves  
 And double death were widely mur-  
 mur'd, left  
 Their own gray tower, or plain-faced  
 tabernacle,  
 To hear him ; all in mourning these,  
 and those  
 With blots of it about them, ribbon,  
 glove  
 Or kerchief ; while the church,—one  
 night, except  
 For greenish glimmerings thro' the  
 lancets,—made  
 Still paler the pale head of him, who  
 tower'd  
 Above them, with his hopes in either  
 grave.

Long o'er his bent brows linger'd  
 Averill,  
 His face magnetic to the hand from  
 which  
 Livid he pluck'd it forth, and labor'd  
 thro'  
 His brief prayer-prelude, gave the  
 verse " Behold,  
 Your house is left unto you desolate !"  
 But lapsed into so long a pause again  
 As half amazed half frightened all his  
 flock :  
 Then from his height and loneliness  
 of grief  
 Bore down in flood, and dash'd his  
 angry heart  
 Against the desolations of the world.

Never since our bad earth became  
 one sea,  
 Which rolling o'er the palaces of the  
 proud,  
 And all but those who knew the living  
 God—  
 Eight that were left to make a purer  
 world—  
 When since had flood, fire, earthquake,  
 thunder, wrought  
 Such waste and havoc as the idolatries

Which from the low light of mortality  
 Shot up their shadows to the Heaven  
 of Heavens,  
 And worshipt their own darkness as  
 the Highest ?  
 " Gash thyself, priest, and honor thy  
 brute Baäl,  
 And to thy worst self sacrifice thyself,  
 For with thy worst self hast thou  
 clothed thy God.  
 Then came a Lord in no wise like to  
 Baäl.  
 The babe shall lead the lion. Surely  
 now  
 The wilderness shall blossom as the  
 rose.  
 Crown thyself, worm, and worship thine  
 own lusts !—  
 No coarse and blockish God of acreage  
 Stands at thy gate for thee to grovel  
 to—  
 Thy God is far diffused in noble groves  
 And princely halls, and farms, and  
 flowing lawns,  
 And heaps of living gold that daily  
 grow,  
 And tittle-scrolls and gorgeous herald-  
 ries.  
 In such a shape dost thou behold thy  
 God.  
 Thou wilt not gash thy flesh for him ;  
 for thine  
 Fares richly, in fair linen, not a hair  
 Ruffled upon the scarfskin, even while  
 The deathless ruler of thy dying house  
 Is wounded to the death that cannot  
 die ;  
 And tho' thou numberest with the fol-  
 lowers  
 Of One who cried ' leave all and follow  
 me.'  
 Thee therefore with His light about  
 thy feet,  
 Thee with His message ringing in thine  
 ears,  
 Thee shall thy brother man, the Lord  
 from Heaven,  
 Born of a village girl, carpenter's son,  
 Wonderful, Prince of peace, the Mighty  
 God,  
 Count the more base idolater of the two ;  
 Crueller : as not passing thro' the fire  
 Bodies, but souls—thy children's—  
 thro' the smoke,  
 The blight of low desires—darkening  
 thine own  
 To thine own likeness ; or if one of  
 these,  
 Thy better born unhappily from thee,  
 Should, as by miracle, grow straight  
 and fair—  
 Friends, I was bid to speak of such a  
 one  
 By those who most have cause to sor-  
 row for her—  
 Fairer than Rachel by the palmy well,  
 Fairer than Ruth among the fields of  
 corn,  
 Fair as the Angel that said ' hail' she  
 seem'd,

Who entering fill'd the house with sudden light  
 For so mine own was brighten'd: where indeed  
 The roof so lowly but that beam of Heaven  
 Dawn'd sometime thro' the doorway? whose the babe  
 Too ragged to be fondled on her lap,  
 Warm'd at her bosom? The poor child of shame,  
 The common care whom no one cared for, leapt  
 To greet her, wasting his forgotten heart,  
 As with the mother he had never known,  
 In gambols; for her fresh and innocent eyes  
 Had such a star of morning in their blue,  
 That all neglected places of the field  
 Broke into nature's music when they saw her.  
 Low was her voice, but won mysterious way  
 Thro' the seal'd ear to which a louder one  
 Was all but silence—free of alms her hand—  
 The hand that robed your cottage-walls with flowers  
 Has often toil'd to clothe your little ones;  
 How often placed upon the sick man's brow  
 Cool'd it, or laid his feverish pillow smooth!  
 Had you one sorrow and she shared it not?  
 One burden and she would not lighten it?  
 One spiritual doubt she did not soothe?  
 Or when some heat of difference sparkled out,  
 How sweetly would she glide between your wraths,  
 And steal you from each other! for she walk'd  
 Wearing the light yoke of that Lord of love, [lee!  
 Who still'd the rolling wave of Gali- And one—of him I was not bid to speak—  
 Was always with her, whom you also knew.  
 Him too you loved, for he was worthy love.  
 And these had been together from the first;  
 They might have been together till the last.  
 Friends, this frail bark of ours, when sorely tried,  
 May wreck itself without the pilot's guilt,  
 Without the captain's knowledge: hope with me.  
 Whose shame is that, if he went hence with shame?

Nor mine the fault, if losing both of these  
 I cry to vacant chairs and widow'd walls,  
 'My house is left unto me desolate.'

While thus he spoke, his hearers wept; but some,  
 Sons of the glebe, with other frowns than those  
 That knit themselves for summer shadow, scowl'd  
 At their great lord. He, when it seem'd he saw  
 No pale sheet-lightnings from afar, but fork'd  
 Of the near storm, and aiming at his head,  
 Sat anger-charm'd from sorrow, soldier-like,  
 Erect: but when the preacher's cadence flow'd  
 Softening thro' all the gentle attributes  
 Of his lost child, the wife, who watch'd his face,  
 Paled at a sudden twitch of his iron mouth;  
 And "O pray God that he hold up" she thought  
 "Or surely I shall shame myself and him."

"Nor yours the blame—for who beside your hearths  
 Can take her place—If echoing me you cry  
 'Our house is left unto us desolate!' But thou, O thou that killest, hadst thou known,  
 O thou that stonest, hadst thou understood  
 The things belonging to thy peace and ours!  
 Is there no prophet but the voice that calls  
 Doom upon kings, or in the waste 'Repent'?  
 Is not our own child on the narrow way,  
 Who down to those that saunter in the broad  
 Cries 'come up hither,' as a prophet to us?  
 Is there no stoning save with flint and rock?  
 Yes, as the dead we weep for testify—No desolation but by sword and fire?  
 Yes, as your moanings witness, and myself  
 Am lonelier, darker, earthlier for my loss.  
 Give me your prayers, for he is past your prayers,  
 Not past the living fount of pity in Heaven.  
 But I that thought myself long-suffering, meek,  
 Exceeding 'poor in spirit'—how the words  
 Have twisted back upon themselves and mear

Vileness, we are grown so proud—I  
 wish'd my voice  
 A rushing tempest of the wrath of God  
 To blow these sacrifices thro' the  
 world—  
 Sent like the twelve-divided concu-  
 bine  
 To inflame the tribes : but there—out  
 yonder—earth  
 Lightens from her own central Hell—  
 O there  
 The red fruit of an old idolatry—  
 The heads of chiefs and princes fall so  
 fast,  
 They cling together in the ghastly  
 sack—  
 The land all shambles—naked mar-  
 riages  
 Flash from the bridge, and ever-mur-  
 der'd France,  
 By shores that darken with the gather-  
 ing wolf,  
 Runs in a river of blood to the sick  
 sea.  
 Is this a time to madden madness  
 then ?  
 Was this a time for these to flaunt  
 their pride ?  
 May Pharaoh's darkness, folds as dense  
 as those  
 Which hid the Holiest from the peo-  
 ple's eyes  
 Ere the great death, shroud this great  
 sin from all !  
 Doubtless our narrow world must can-  
 vass it :  
 O rather pray for those and pity them,  
 Who thro' their own desire accom-  
 plish'd bring  
 Their own gray hairs with sorrow to  
 the grave—  
 Who broke the bond which they de-  
 sired to break,  
 Which else had link'd their race with  
 times to come—  
 Who wove coarse webs to snare her  
 purity,  
 Grossly contriving their dear daugh-  
 ter's good—  
 Poor souls, and knew not what they  
 did, but sat  
 Ignorant, devising their own daugh-  
 ter's death !  
 May not that earthly chastisement suf-  
 fice ?  
 Have not our love and reverence left  
 them bare ?  
 Will not another take their heritage ?  
 Will there be children's laughter in  
 their hall  
 For ever and for ever, or one stone  
 Left on another, or is it a light thing  
 That I their guest, their host, their an-  
 cient friend,  
 I made by these the last of all my race  
 Must cry to these the last of theirs, as  
 cried  
 Christ ere His agony to those that swore  
 Not by the temple but the gold, and  
 made

Their own traditions God, and slew the  
 Lord,  
 And left their memories a world's  
 curse—' Behold,  
 Your house is left unto you des-  
 olate ' ? ”  
 Ended he had not, but she brook'd  
 no more :  
 Long since her heart had beat re-  
 mo:slessly,  
 Her cramp't-up sorrow pain'd her, and  
 a sense  
 Of meanness in her unresisting life.  
 Then their eyes vex't her ; for on en-  
 tering  
 He had cast the curtains of their seat  
 aside—  
 Black velvet of the costliest—she her-  
 self  
 Had seen to that: fain had she closed  
 them now,  
 Yet dared not stir to do it, only near'd  
 Her husband inch by inch, but when  
 she laid,  
 Wifelike, her hand in one of his, he  
 veil'd  
 His face with the other, and at once,  
 as falls  
 A creeper when the prop is broken,  
 fell  
 The woman shrieking at his feet, and  
 swoon'd.  
 Then her own people bore along the  
 nave  
 Her pendent hands, and narrow mea-  
 gre face  
 Seam'd with the shallow cares of fifty  
 years :  
 And her the Lord of all the landscape  
 round  
 Ev'n to his last horizon, and of all  
 Who peer'd at him so keenly, follow'd  
 out  
 Tall and erect, but in the middle aisle  
 Reel'd, as a footsore ox in crowded  
 ways  
 Stumbling across the market to his  
 death,  
 Unpitied ; for he groped as blind, and  
 seem'd  
 Always about to fall, grasping the  
 pews  
 And oaken finials till he touch'd the  
 door ;  
 Yet to the lychgate, where his chariot  
 stood,  
 Strode from the porch, tall and erect  
 again.  
 But nevermore did either pass the  
 gate  
 Save under pall with bearers. In one  
 month,  
 Thro' weary and yet ever wearier  
 hours,  
 The childless mother went to seek her  
 child ;  
 And when he felt the silence of his  
 house

About him, and the change and not  
the change,  
And those fixt eyes of painted ances-  
tors  
Staring for ever from their gilded walls  
On him their last descendant, his own  
head  
Began to droop, to fall; the man be-  
came  
Imbecile; his one word was "des-  
olate";  
Dead for two years before his death  
was he;  
But when the second Christmas came,  
escaped  
His keepers, and the silence which he  
felt,  
To find a deeper in the narrow gloom  
By wife and child; nor wanted at his  
end  
The dark retinue reverencing death  
At golden thresholds; nor from tender  
hearts,  
And those who sorrow'd o'er a van-  
ish'd race,  
Pity, the violet on the tyrant's grave.  
Then the great Hall was wholly broken  
down,  
And the broad woodland parcell'd into  
farms;  
And where the two contrived their  
daughter's good,  
Lies the hawk's cast, the mole has  
made his run,  
The hedgehog underneath the plantain  
bores,  
The rabbit fondles his own harmless  
face,  
The slow-worm creeps, and the thin  
weasel there  
Follows the mouse, and all is open  
field.

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SEA DREAMS.

A CITY clerk, but gently born and  
bred;  
His wife, an unknown artist's orphan  
child—  
One babe was theirs, a Margaret, three  
years old:  
They, thinking that her clear german-  
der eye  
Droopt in the giant-factoried city-  
gloom,  
Came, with a month's leave given them  
to the sea:  
For which his gains were dock'd, how-  
ever small:  
Small were his gains, and hard his  
work; besides,  
Their slender household fortunes (for  
the man  
Had risk'd his little) like the little  
thrift,  
Trembled in perilous places o'er a  
deep:  
And oft, when sitting all alone, his  
face

Would darken, as he cursed his credu-  
lousness,  
And that one unctious mouth which  
lured him, rogue,  
To buy strange shares in some Peru-  
vian mine,  
Now seaward-bound for health they  
gain'd a coast,  
All sand and cliff and deep-inrunning  
cave,  
At close of day; slept, woke, and went  
the next,  
The Sabbath, pious variers from the  
church,  
To chapel; where a heated pulpiter,  
Not preaching simple Christ to simple  
men,  
Announced the coming doom, and ful-  
minated  
Against the scarlet woman and her  
creed:  
For sideways up he swung his arms,  
and shriek'd  
"Thus, thus with violence," ev'n as if  
he held  
The Apocalyptic millstone, and him-  
self  
Were that great Angel; "Thus with  
violence  
Shall Babylon be cast into the sea;  
Then comes the close." The gentle-  
hearted wife  
Sat shuddering at the ruin of a world;  
He at his own; but when the wordy  
storm  
Had ended, forth they came and paced  
the shore,  
Ran in and out the long sea-framing  
caves,  
Drank the large air, and saw, but  
scarce believed  
(The sootflake of so many a summer  
still  
Clung to their fancies) that they saw  
the sea.  
So now on sand they walk'd, and now  
on cliff,  
Lingering about the thymy promonto-  
ries,  
Till all the sails were darken'd in the  
west,  
And rosed in the east: then homeward  
and to bed:  
Where she, who kept a tender Chris-  
tian hope  
Haunting a holy text, and still to that  
Returning, as the bird returns, at  
night,  
"Let not the sun go down upon your  
wrath,"  
Said, "Love, forgive him;" but he  
did not speak;  
And silenced by that silence lay the  
wife,  
Remembering her dear Lord who died  
for all,  
And musing on the little lives of  
men,  
And how they mar this little by their  
feuds.

But while the two were sleeping, a full tide  
 Rose with ground-swell, which, on the foremost rocks  
 Touching, upjetted in spirts of wild sea-smoke,  
 And scaled in sheets of wasteful foam, and fell  
 In vast sea-cataracts—ever and anon  
 Dead claps of thunder from within the cliffs  
 Heard thro' the living roar. At this the babe,  
 Their Margaret cradled near them, wail'd and woke  
 The mother, and the father suddenly cried,  
 "A wreck, a wreck!" then turn'd, and groaning said,  
 "Forgive! How many will say, 'forgive,' and find  
 A sort of absolution in the sound  
 To hate a little longer! No; the sin  
 That neither God nor man can well forgive,  
 Hypocrisy, I saw it in him at once.  
 Is it so true that second thoughts are best?  
 Not first, and third, which are a riper first?  
 Too ripe, too late! they come too late for use.  
 Ah love, there surely lives in man and beast  
 Something divine to warn them of their foes:  
 And such a sense, when first I fronted him,  
 Said, 'trust him not;' but after, when I came  
 To know him more, I lost it, knew him less;  
 Fought with what seem'd my own uncharity;  
 Sat at his table; drank his costly wines;  
 Made more and more allowance for his talk;  
 Went further, fool! and trusted him with all,  
 All my poor scrapings from a dozen years  
 Of dust and deskwork: there is no such mine,  
 None; but a gulf of ruin, swallowing gold,  
 Not making. Ruin'd! ruin'd! the sea roars  
 Ruin: a fearful night!"  
 "Not fearful; fair,"  
 Said the good wife, "if every star in heaven  
 Can make it fair: you do but hear the tide.  
 Had you ill dreams?"  
 "O yes," he said, "I dream'd  
 Of such a tide swelling toward the land,  
 And I from out the boundless outer deep

Swept with it to the shore, and enter'd  
 one  
 Of those dark caves that run beneath the cliffs.  
 I thought the motion of the boundless deep  
 Bore through the cave, and I was heaved upon it  
 In darkness: then I saw one lovely star  
 Larger and larger. 'What a world,' I thought,  
 'To live in!' but in moving on I found  
 Only the landward exit of the cave,  
 Bright with the sun upon the stream beyond:  
 And near the light a giant woman sat,  
 All over earthy, like a piece of earth,  
 A pickaxe in her hand: then out I slipt  
 Into a land all sun and blossom, trees  
 As high as heaven, and every bird that sings:  
 And here the night-light flickering in my eyes  
 Awoke me."

"That was then your dream," she said,  
 "Not sad, but sweet."

"So sweet, I lay," said he,  
 "And mused upon it, drifting up the stream  
 In fancy, till I slept again, and pieced  
 The broken vision; for I dream'd that still  
 The motion of the great deep bore me on.  
 And that the woman walk'd upon the brink:  
 I wonder'd at her strength, and ask'd her of it:  
 'It came,' she said, 'by working in the mines.'  
 O then to ask her of my shares, I thought;  
 And ask'd; but not a word; she shook her head.  
 And then the motion of the current ceased,  
 And there was rolling thunder; and we reach'd  
 A mountain, like a wall of burrs and thorns;  
 But she with her strong feet up the steep hill  
 Trod out a path: I follow'd; and at top  
 She pointed seaward; there a fleet of glass,  
 That seem'd a fleet of jewels under me,  
 Sailing along before a gloomy cloud  
 That not one moment ceased to thunder, past  
 In sunshine: right across its track there lay,  
 Down in the water, a long reef of gold,  
 Or what seem'd gold; and I was glad at first

To think that in our often-ransack'd  
world  
Still so much gold was left ; and then  
I fear'd  
Lest the gay navy there should splinter  
on it,  
And fearing waved my arm to warn  
them off ;  
An idle signal, for the brittle fleet  
(I thought I could have died to save it)  
near'd,  
Touch'd, clink'd, and clash'd, and van-  
ish'd, and I woke,  
I heard the clash so clearly. Now I see  
My dream was Life ; the woman honest  
Work ;  
And my poor venture but a fleet of  
glass  
Wreck'd on a reef of visionary gold."

"Nay," said the kindly wife to com-  
fort him,  
"You raised your arm, you tumbled  
down and broke  
The glass with little Margaret's medi-  
cine in it ;  
And, breaking that, you made and  
broke your dream ;  
A trifle makes a dream, a trifle breaks."

"No trifle," groan'd the husband ;  
"yesterday  
I met him suddenly in the street, and  
ask'd  
That which I ask'd the woman in my  
dream.  
Like her, he shook his head. 'Show  
me the books !'  
He dodged me with a long and loose  
account.  
'The books, the books !' but he, he  
could not wait,  
Bound on a matter he of life and  
death :  
When the great Books (see Daniel  
seven and ten)  
Were open'd, I should find he meant  
me well ;  
And then began to bloat himself, and  
ooze  
All over with the fat affectionate smile  
That makes the widow lean. 'My  
dearest friend,  
Have faith, have faith ! We live by  
faith,' said he ;  
'And all things work together for the  
good  
Of those'—it makes me sick to quote  
him—last  
Gript my hand hard, and with God-  
bless-you went.  
I stood like one that had received a  
blow :  
I found a hard friend in his loose  
accounts,  
A loose one in the hard grip of his hand,  
A curse in his God-bless-you : then  
my eyes  
Pursued him down the street, and far  
away,

Among the honest shoulders of the  
crowd,  
Read rascal in the motions of his back,  
And scoundrel in the supple-sliding  
knee."

"Was he so bound, poor soul ?" said  
the good wife ;  
"So are we all : but do not call him,  
love,  
Before you prove him, rogue, and  
proved, forgive.  
His gain is loss ; for he that wrongs his  
friend  
Wrongs himself more, and ever bears  
about  
A silent court of justice in his breast,  
Himself the judge and jury, and himself  
The prisoner, at the bar, ever con-  
demn'd :  
And that drags down his life : then  
comes what comes  
Hereafter : and he meant, he said he  
meant, you well."

"With all his conscience and one  
eye askew"—  
Love, let me quote these lines, that  
you may learn  
A man is likewise counsel for himself,  
Too often, in that silent court of yours—  
'With all his conscience and one eye  
askew,  
So false, he partly took himself for  
true :  
Whose pious talk, when most his heart  
was dry,  
Made wet the crafty crowsfoot round  
his eye ;  
Who, never naming God except for  
gain,  
So never took that useful name in  
vain ;  
Made Him his catspaw and the Cross  
his tool.  
And Christ the bait to trap his dupe  
and fool ;  
Nor deeds of gift, but gifts of grace he  
forged,  
And snake-like slimed his victim ere  
he gorged ;  
And oft at Bible meetings, o'er the  
rest  
Arising, did his holy oily best,  
Dropping the too rough H in Hell and  
Heaven,  
To spread the Word by which himself  
had thriven.'

How like you this old satire ?"  
"Nay," she said,  
"I loathe it: he had never kindly heart,  
Nor ever cared to better his own kind,  
Who first wrote satire, with no pity in it.  
But will you hear my dream, for I had  
one  
That altogether went to music ? Still  
It awed me."

Then she told it, having dream'd  
Of that same coast.

"—But round the North, a light,  
 A belt, it seem'd, of luminous vapor,  
 lay,  
 And ever in it a low musical note  
 Swell'd up and died ; and, as it swell'd,  
 a ridge  
 Of breaker issued from the belt, and  
 still  
 Grew with the growing note, and when  
 the note  
 Had reach'd a thunderous fulness, on  
 those cliffs  
 Broke, mixt with awful light (the same  
 as that  
 Living within the belt) whereby she saw  
 That all those lines of cliffs were clits  
 no more,  
 But huge cathedral fronts of every age  
 Grave, florid, stern, as far as eye could  
 see,  
 One after one : and then the great  
 ridge drew,  
 Lessening to the lessening music, back,  
 And past into the belt and swell'd  
 again  
 Slowly to music : ever when it broke  
 The statues, king or saint, or founder  
 fell ;  
 Then from the gaps and chasms of ruin  
 left  
 Came men and women in dark clusters  
 round,  
 Some crying, ' Set them up ! they shall  
 not fall !'  
 And others ' Let them lie, for they  
 have fall'n.'  
 And still they strove and wrangled ;  
 and she grieved  
 In her strange dream, she knew not  
 why, to find  
 Their wildest wallings never out of  
 tune  
 With that sweet note ; and ever as their  
 shrieks  
 Ran highest up the gamut, that great  
 wave  
 Returning, while none mark'd it, on  
 the crowd  
 Broke, mixt with awful light, and  
 show'd their eyes  
 Glaring, and passionate looks, and  
 swept away  
 The men of flesh and blood, and men  
 of stone,  
 To the waste deeps together.

" Then I fixt  
 My wistful eyes on two fair images,  
 Both crown'd with stars and high  
 among the stars,—  
 The Virgin Mother standing with her  
 child  
 High up on one of those dark minster-  
 fronts—  
 Till she began to totter, and the child  
 Clung to the mother, and sent out a cry  
 Which mixt with little Margaret's, and  
 I woke,  
 And my dream awed me :—well—but  
 what are dreams ?

Yours came but from the breaking of  
 glass,  
 And mine but from the crying of a  
 child."

" Child ? No ! " said he, " but this  
 tide's roar, and his,  
 Our Boanerges with his threats of doom,  
 And loud-lung'd Antibabylonianisms  
 (Altho' I grant but little music there)  
 Went both to make your dream : but  
 if there were  
 A music harmonizing our wild cries,  
 Sphere-music such as that you dream'd  
 about,  
 Why, that would make our passions  
 far too like  
 The discords dear to the musician. No—  
 One shriek of hate would jar all the  
 hymns of heaven :  
 True Devils with no ear, they howl in  
 tune  
 With nothing but the Devil ! "

" ' True ' indeed !  
 One of our town, but later by an hour  
 Here than ourselves, spoke with me on  
 the shore ;  
 While you were running down the  
 sands, and made  
 The dimpled founce of the sea-fur-  
 below flap,  
 Good man, to please the child. She  
 brought strange news.  
 Why were you silent when I spoke to-  
 night ?  
 I had set my heart on your forgiving  
 him  
 Before you knew. We must forgive the  
 dead."  
 " Dead ! who is dead ? "  
 " The man your eye pursued.  
 A little after you had parted with him,  
 He suddenly dropt dead of heart-  
 disease."

" Dead ? he ? of heart-disease ? what  
 heart had he  
 To die of ? dead ! "

" Ah, dearest, if there be  
 A devil in man, there is an angel too,  
 And if he did that wrong you charge  
 him with,  
 His angel broke his heart. But your  
 rough voice  
 (You spoke so loud) has roused the  
 child again.  
 Sleep, little birdie. sleep ! will she not  
 sleep  
 Without her ' little birdie ? ' well then,  
 sleep,  
 And I will sing you ' birdie.' "

Saying this,  
 The woman half turn'd round from  
 him she loved,  
 Left him one hand, and reaching thro'  
 the night  
 Her other, found (for it was close beside)  
 And half embraced the basket cradle-  
 head

With one soft arm, which, like the  
pliant bough  
That moving moves the nest and nest-  
ling, sway'd  
The cradle, while she sang this baby  
song.

What does little birdie say  
In her nest at peep of day?  
Let me fly, says little birdie,  
Mother, let me fly away.  
Birdie, rest a little longer,  
Till the little wings are stronger.  
So she rests a little longer,  
Then she flies away.

What does little baby say,  
In her bed at peep of day?  
Baby says, like little birdie,  
Let me rise and fly away.  
Baby, sleep a little longer,  
Till the little limbs are stronger.  
If she sleeps a little longer  
Baby too shall fly away.

"She sleeps: let us too, let all evil,  
sleep.

He also sleeps--another sleep than ours.  
He can do no more wrong: forgive him,  
dear.

"And I shall sleep the sounder!"

Then the man,

"His deeds yet live, the worst is yet to  
come.

Yet let your sleep for this one night  
be sound:

I do forgive him!"

"Thanks, my love," she said,

"Your own will be the sweeter," and  
they slept.

## THE GRANDMOTHER.

### I.

AND Willy, my eldest-born, is gone,  
you say, little Anne?  
Ruddy, and white, and strong on his  
legs, he looks like a man.  
And Willy's wife has written; she  
never was over-wise.  
Never the wife for Willy: he wouldn't  
take my advice.

### II.

For, Annie, you see, her father was not  
the man to save,  
Hadh't a head to manage, and drank  
himself into his grave.  
Pretty enough, very pretty! but I was  
against it for one.  
Eh!--but he wouldn't hear me--and  
Willy, you say, is gone.

### III.

Willy, my beauty, my eldest-born, the  
flower of the flock;  
Never a man could fling him; for  
Willy stood like a rock.

"Here's a leg for a babe of a week!"  
says doctor; and he would be  
bound.

There was not his like that year in  
twenty parishes round.

### IV.

Strong of his hands, and strong on his  
legs, but still of his tongue!  
I ought to have gone before him: I  
wonder he went so young.  
I cannot cry for him, Annie: I have  
not long to stay;  
Perhaps I shall see him the sooner, for  
he lived far away.

### V.

Why do you look at me, Annie? you  
think I am hard and cold;  
But all my children have gone before  
me, I am so old:  
I cannot weep for Willy, nor can I  
weep for the rest;  
Only at your age, Annie, I could have  
wept with the best.

### VI.

For I remember a quarrel I had with  
your father, my dear,  
All for a slanderous story, that cost me  
many a tear.  
I mean your grandfather, Annie: it  
cost me a world of woe.  
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy  
years ago.

### VII.

For Jenny, my cousin, had come to the  
place, and I knew right well  
That Jenny had tript in her time: I  
knew, but I would not tell.  
And she to be coming and slandering  
me, the base little liar!  
But the tongue is a fire as you know,  
my dear, the tongue is a fire.

### VIII.

And the parson made it his text that  
week, and he said likewise,  
That a lie which is half a truth is ever  
the blackest of lies,  
That a lie which is all a lie may be met  
and fought with outright,  
But a lie which is part a truth is a  
harder matter to fight.

### IX.

And Willy had not been down to the  
farm for a week and a day;  
And all things look'd half-dead, tho' it  
was the middle of May.  
Jennie, to slander me, who knew what  
Jennie had been!  
But soiling another, Annie, will never  
make one's self clean.

### X.

And cried myself wellnigh blind, and  
all of an evening late

I climb'd to the top of the garth, and  
stood by the road at the gate.  
The moon like a rick on fire was rising  
over the dale,  
And whit, whit, whit, in the bush beside  
me chirrup the nightingale.

## XI.

All of a sudden he stopt : there past  
by the gate of the farm,  
Willy,—he didn't see me,—and Jenny  
hung on his arm.  
Out into the road I started, and spoke  
I scarce knew how ;  
Ah, there's no fool like the old one—  
it makes me angry now.

## XII.

Willy stood up like a man, and look'd  
the thing that he meant ;  
Jenny, the viper, made me a mocking  
courtesy, and went.  
And I said, " Let us part : in a hundred  
years it'll be all the same,  
You cannot love me at all, if you love  
not my good name."

## XIII.

And he turn'd, and I saw his eyes all  
wet, in the sweet moonshine :  
" Sweetheart, I love you so well that  
your good name is mine.  
And what do I care for Jane, let her  
speak of you well or ill ;  
But marry me out of hand : we too  
shall be happy still."

## XIV.

" Marry you, Willy !" said I, " but I  
needs must speak my mind,  
And I fear you'll listen to tales, be  
jealous and hard and unkind."  
But he turn'd and claspt me in his arms,  
and answer'd, " No, love, no ;"  
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy  
years ago.

## XV.

So Willy and I were wedded : I wore a  
lilac gown ;  
And the ringers rang with a will, and  
he gave the ringers a crown.  
But the first that ever I bare was dead  
before he was born,  
Shadow and shine is life, little Annie,  
flower and thorn.

## XVI.

That was the first time, too, that ever  
I thought of death.  
There lay the sweet little body that  
never had drawn a breath.  
I had not wept, little Annie, not since  
I had been a wife ;  
But I wept like a child that day, for the  
babe had fought for his life

## XVII.

His dear little face was troubled, as if  
with anger or pain :

I look'd at the still little body—his  
trouble had all been in vain.  
For Willy I cannot weep, I shall see  
him another morn :  
But I wept like a child for the child  
that was dead before he was  
born.

## XVIII.

But he cheer'd me, my good man, for  
he seldom said me nay :  
Kind, like a man, was he ; like a man,  
too, would have his way :  
Never jealous—not he : we had many a  
happy year ;  
And he died, and I could not weep—  
my own time seem'd so near.

## XIX.

But I wish'd it had been God's will that  
I too, then could have died :  
I began to be tired a little, and fain  
had slept at his side.  
And that was ten years back, or more,  
if I don't forget :  
But as to the children, Annie, they're  
all about me yet.

## XX.

Pattering over the boards, my Annie  
who left me at two,  
Patter she goes, my own little Annie,  
an Annie like you :  
Pattering over the boards, she comes  
and goes at her will,  
While Harry is in the five-acre and  
Charlie ploughing the hill.

## XXI.

And Harry and Charlie, I hear them  
too—they sing to their team :  
Often they come to the door in a pleas-  
ant kind of a dream.  
They come and sit by my chair, they  
hover about my bed—  
I am not always certain if they be alive  
or dead.

## XXII.

And yet I know for a truth, there's  
none of them left alive ;  
For Harry went at sixty, your father  
at sixty-five :  
And Willy, my eldest-born, at nigh  
threescore and ten ;  
I knew them all as babies, and now  
they're elderly men.

## XXIII.

For mine is a time of peace, it is not  
often I grieve ;  
I am oftener sitting at home in my fa-  
ther's farm at eve :  
And the neighbors come and laugh and  
gossip, and so do I ;  
I find myself often laughing at things  
that have long gone by.

## XXIV.

To be sure the preacher says, our sins  
should make us sad :

But mine is a time of peace, and there  
is Grace to be had ;  
And God, not man, is the Judge of us  
all when life shall cease ;  
And in this Book, little Annie, the  
message is one of Peace.

## XXV.

And age is a time of peace, so it be  
free from pain,  
And happy has been my life ; but I  
would not live it again.  
I seem to be tired a little, that's all,  
and long for rest ;  
Only at your age, Annie, I could have  
wept with the best.

## XXVI.

So Willy has gone, my beauty, my  
eldest-born, my flower ;  
But how can I weep for Willy, he has  
but gone for an hour,—  
Gone for a minute, my son, from this  
room into the next ;  
I, too, shall go in a minute. What time  
have I to be vexed ;

## XXVII.

And Willy's wife has written, she  
never was over-wise.  
Get me my glasses, Annie : thank God  
that I keep my eyes.  
There is but a trifle left you, when I  
shall have past away.  
But stay with the old woman now : you  
cannot have long to stay.

## NORTHERN FARMER.

## OLD STYLE.

## I.

WHEER 'asta beän saw long and meä  
liggin' 'ere aloän ?  
Noorse ? thoort nowto o' a noorse : whoy,  
Doctor's abeän an' agoän :  
Says that I moänt 'a naw moor aäle :  
but I beänt a fool :  
Git ma my aäle, for I beänt a-gooän' to  
breäk my rule.

## II.

Doctors, they knows nowt, for a says  
what's nawways true :  
Naw soort o' koind o' use to saäy the  
things that a do.  
I've 'ed my point o' aäle ivry noight  
sin' I beän 'ere,  
An' I've 'ed my quart ivry market-  
noight for foorty year.

## III.

Parson's a beän loikewise, an' a sittin'  
'ere o' my bed.  
"The amoighty's a taäkin o' you to  
'issen, my friend," a said,  
An' a towd ma my sins, an' 's toithe  
were due, an' I gied it in hond ;  
I done my duty by 'm, as I 'a done by  
the lond.

## IV.

Larn'd a ma' beä. I reckons I 'annot  
sa mooch to larn.  
But a cast oop, thot a did, 'boot Bessy  
Marris's bairn.  
Thaw a knaws I hallus voäted wi'  
Squoire an' choorch an staäte,  
An' i' the woost o' toimes I wur niver  
agin the raäte.

## V.

An' I hallus coomed to's choorch afoor  
moy Sally wur deäd,  
An' 'eerd un a bummin' awaäy loike a  
buzzard-clock \* ower my eäd,  
An' I niver knaw'd whot a meän'd bu  
I thowt a 'ad summut to saäy,  
An' I thowt a said whot owt to 'a a said  
an' I coom'd awaäy.

## VI.

Bessy Marris's bairn ! tha knaws she  
laäid it to meä.  
Mowt 'a beän, mayhap, for she wur a  
bad un, sheä.  
'Siver, I kep 'm, I kep 'm, my lass, tha  
mun understand ;  
I done my duty by 'm as I 'a done  
by the lond.

## VII.

But Parson a comes an' a goos, an' a  
says it eäsy an' freeä  
"The amoighty's a taäkin o' you to  
'issen, my friend," says 'eä.  
I weänt saäy men be loiars, thaw sum-  
mun said it in 'aäste :  
But a reäds wonn sarmin a weeäk,  
an' I 'a stubb'd Thurnaby  
waäste.

## VIII.

D'ya moind the waäste, my lass ? naw,  
naw, tha was not born then ;  
Theer wur a boggle in it, I often 'eerd  
'm mysen ;  
Moäst loike a butter-bump, † for I 'eerd  
'm aboot an' aboot,  
But I stubb'd 'm oop wi' the lot, a '  
raäved an' rembled 'm oot.

## IX.

Keäper's it wur ; fo' they fun 'm theci  
a-laäid on 'is face  
Doon i' the woild 'enemies † afoor I  
coomed to the plaäce.  
Noäks o' Thimbleby—toaner 'ed shot  
'm as deäd as a naäil.  
Noäks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize—  
but git ma my aäle.

## X.

Dubbut loook at the waäste ; theer  
warn't not feeäd for a cow ;  
Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, an'  
look at it now—  
Warn't worth nowt a haäcre, an' now  
theer's lots o' feeäd,  
Fours. oor yows upon it an' some on it  
doon in seäd.

\* Cockchafer

† Bittern.

‡ Anemones.

## XL

Nobbut a bit on it's left, an' I meän'd  
to 'a stubb'd it at fall,  
Done it ta-year I meän'd, an' runn'd  
plough thruff it an' all,  
If godamoughty an' parson 'ud nobbut  
let ma aloän,  
Meä, wi' haäte oonderd haäcre o'  
Squire's, an' lond o' my oän.

## XII.

Do godamoughty knaw what a's doing  
a-taäkin' o' meä ?  
I beänt wonn as saws 'ere a beän an'  
yonder a peä ;  
An' Squire 'ull be sa mad an' all—a'  
dear a' dear!  
And I 'a managed for Squire come  
Michaelmas thutty year.

## XIII.

A mowt 'a taäen owd Joänes, as 'ant  
nor a 'aäpoth o' sense,  
Or a mowt 'a taäen young Robins—a  
niver mended a fence :  
But godamoughty a moost taäke meä  
an' taäke ma now  
Wi' 'aäf the cows to cauve an' Thurna-  
by hoalms to plough !

## XIV.

Look 'ow quoloty smoiles when they  
seeäs ma a passin' by,  
Says to thessén naw doubt "what a  
man a beä sewer-ly !"  
For they knaws what I beän to Squire  
sin fust a comed to the 'All ;  
I done my duty by Squire an' I done  
my duty by hall.

## XV.

Squire's in Lunnon, an' summun I  
reckons 'ull 'a to wroite,  
For whoä 's to howd the lond ater meä  
thot muddles ma quoit ;  
Sartin-sewer I beä, thot a weänt niver  
give it to Joänes,  
Naw nor a moänt to Robins—a niver  
rembles the stoäns.

## XVI.

But summun 'ull come ater meä may  
hap wi' is kittle o' steäm  
Huzzin' an' maäzin' the blessed feälds  
wi' the Divil's oän teäm.  
If I mun doy I mun doy, an' loife they  
says is sweet,  
But if I mun doy I mun doy, for I  
couldn abear to see it.

## XVII.

What atta stannin' theer for, an' doesn  
bring ma the 'aäle ?  
Doctor's a toättler, lass, an a 's hallusi'  
the owd taäle ;  
I weänt breäk rules for Doctor, aknaws  
naw moor nor a floy ;  
Git ma my 'aäle I tell tha, an' if I mun  
doy I mun doy.

## TITHONUS.

THE woods decay, the woods decay and  
fall,  
The vapors weep their burden to the  
ground,  
Man comes and tills the field and lies  
beneath,  
And after many a summer dies the  
swan.  
Me only cruel immortality  
Consumes : I wither slowly in thine  
arms,  
Here at the quiet limit of the world,  
A white-hair'd shadow roaming like a  
dream  
The ever silent spaces of the East,  
Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls  
of morn.

Alas ! for this gray shadow, once a  
man—  
So glorious in his beauty and thy  
choice,  
Who madest him thy chosen, that he  
seem'd  
To his great heart none other than a  
God !  
I ask'd thee, "Give me immortality."  
Then did'st thou grant mine asking  
with a smile,  
Like wealthy men who care not how  
they give.  
But thy strong Hours indignant work'd  
their wills,  
And beat me down and marr'd and  
wasted me,  
And tho' they could not end me, left  
me maim'd  
To dwell in presence of immortal youth,  
Immortal age beside immortal youth,  
And all I was, in ashes. Can thy love,  
Thy beauty, make amends, tho' even  
now,  
Close over us, the silver star, thy guide,  
Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill  
with tears  
To hear me ? Let me go : take back  
thy gift :  
Why should a man desire in any way  
To vary from the kindly race of men,  
Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance  
Where all should pause, as is most  
meet for all ?

A soft air fans the cloud apart :  
there comes  
A glimpse of that dark world where I  
was born.  
Once more the old mysterious glimmer  
steals  
From thy pure brows, and from thy  
shoulders pure,  
And bosom beating with a heart re-  
new'd.  
Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the  
gloom,  
Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close  
to mine.

Ere yet they blind the stars, and the  
wild team  
Which love thee, yearning for thy  
yoke, arise,  
And shake the darkness from their  
loosen'd manes,  
And beat the twilight into flakes of  
fire.

Lo ! ever thus thou growest beautiful  
In silence, then before thine answer  
given  
Departest, and thy tears are on my  
cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with  
thy tears,  
And make me tremble lest a saying  
learnt,  
In days far-off, on that dark earth, be  
true ?  
"The Gods themselves cannot recall  
their gifts."

Ay me ! ay me ! with what another  
heart  
In days far-off, and with what other  
eyes  
I used to watch—if I be he that  
watch'd—  
The lucid outline forming round thee ;  
saw  
The dim curls kindle into sunny rings ;  
Changed with thy mystic change, and  
felt my blood  
Glow with the glow that slowly crim-  
son'd all  
Thy presence and thy portals, while I  
lay,  
Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing  
dewy-warm  
With kisses balmier than half-opening  
buds  
Of April, and could hear the lips that  
kiss'd  
Whispering I knew not what of wild  
and sweet,  
Like that strange song I heard Apollo  
sing,  
While Ilion like a mist rose into  
towers.

Yet hold me not for ever in thine  
East :  
How can my nature longer mix with  
thine ?  
Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold  
Are all thy lights, and cold my wrin-  
kled feet  
Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when  
the steam  
Floats up from those dim fields about  
the homes  
Of happy men that have the power to  
die,  
And grassy barrows of the happier  
dead.  
Release me, and restore me to the  
ground ;

Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my  
grave :  
Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by  
morn ;  
I earth in earth forget these empty  
courts,  
And thee returning on thy silver  
wheels.

## THE VOYAGE.

### I.

We left behind the painted buoy  
That tosses at the harbor-mouth ;  
And madly danced our hearts with joy,  
As fast we fled to the South :  
How fresh was every sight and sound  
On open main or winding shore !  
We knew the merry world was round,  
And we might sail for evermore.

### II.

Warm broke the breeze against the  
brow,  
Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail :  
The Lady's-head upon the prow  
Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd the  
gale.  
The broad seas swell'd to meet the keel,  
And swept behind : so quick the run,  
We felt the good ship shake and reel,  
We seem'd to sail into the Sun !

### III.

How oft we saw the Sun retire,  
And burn the threshold of the night,  
Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,  
And sleep beneath his pillar'd light !  
How oft the purple-skirted robe  
Of twilight slowly downward drawn,  
As thro' the slumber of the globe  
Again we dash'd into the dawn !

### IV.

New stars all night above the brim  
Of waters lighten'd into view ;  
They climb'd as quickly, for the rim  
Changed every moment as we flew.  
Far ran the naked moon across  
The houseless ocean's heaving field,  
Or flying shone, the silver boss  
Of her own halo's dusky shield ;

### V.

The peaky islet shifted shapes,  
High towns on hills were dimly seen,  
We past long lines of Northern capes  
And dewy Northern meadows green.  
We came to warmer waves, and deep  
Across the boundless east we drove,  
Where those long swells of breaker  
sweep  
The nutmeg rocks and isles of cloves,  
By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,

### VI.

Gloom'd the low coast and quivering  
brine  
With ashy rains, that spreading made

Fantastic plume or sable pine ;  
By sands and steaming flats and floods,  
Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,  
And hills and scarlet-mingled woods  
Glow'd for a moment as we past.

VII.

O hundred shores of happy climes,  
How swiftly stream'd ye by the bark !  
At times the whole sea burn'd, at times  
With wakes of fire we tore the dark ;  
At times a carven craft would shoot  
From havens hid in fairy bowers,  
With naked limbs and flowers and fruit,  
But we nor paused for fruit nor  
flowers.

VIII.

For one fair Vision ever fled  
Down the waste wafers day and  
night,  
And still we follow'd where she led,  
In hope to gain upon her flight.  
Her face was evermore unseen,  
And fixt upon the far sea-line ;  
But each man murn'd, " O, my  
Queen,  
I follow till I make thee mine."

IX.

And now we lost her, now she gleam'd  
Like Fancy made of golden air,  
Now nearer to the prow she seem'd  
Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge  
fair,  
Now high on waves that idly burst  
Like Heavenly Hope she crown'd  
the sea,  
And now, the bloodless point reversed,  
She bore the blade of Liberty.

X.

And only one among us—him  
We pleas'd not—he was seldom  
pleas'd :  
He saw not far : his eyes were dim :  
But ours he swore were all diseased.  
" A ship of fools," he shriek'd in spite,  
" A ship of fools," he sneer'd and  
wept.  
And overboard one stormy night  
He cast his body, and on we swept.

XI.

And never sail of ours was furl'd,  
Nor anchor dropt at eve or morn ;  
We loved the glories of the world,  
But laws of nature were our scorn ;  
For blasts would rise and rave and  
cease,  
But whence were those that drove  
the sail  
Across the whirlwind's heart of peace,  
And to and thro' the counter-gale ?

XII.

Again to colder climes we came,  
For still we follow'd where she led :  
Now mate is blind and captain lame,  
And half the crew are sick or dead.

But blind or lame or sick or sound  
We follow that which flies before :  
We know the merry world is round,  
And we may sail for evermore.

IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ.

ALL along the valley, stream that flash-  
est white,  
Deepening thy voice with the deepen-  
ing of the night,  
All along the valley, where thy waters  
flow,  
I walk'd with one I loved two and thir-  
ty years ago.  
All along the valley while I walk'd to-  
day,  
The two and thirty years were a mist  
that rolls away ;  
For all along the valley, down thy  
rocky bed  
Thy living voice to me was as the voice  
of the dead,  
And all along the valley, by rock and  
cave and tree,  
The voice of the dead was a living  
voice to me.

THE FLOWER.

ONCE in a golden hour  
I cast to earth a seed.  
Up there came a flower,  
The people said, a weed.  
To and fro they went  
Thro' my garden-bower,  
And muttering discontent  
Cursed me and my flower.  
Then it grew so tall  
It wore a crown of light,  
But thieves from o'er the wall,  
Stole the seed by night.  
Sow'd it far and wide  
By every town and tower,  
Till all the people cried,  
" Splendid is the flower."  
Read my little fable :  
He that runs may read.  
Most can raise the flowers now,  
For all have got the seed.  
And some are pretty enough,  
And some are poor indeed  
And now again the people  
Call it but a weed.

REQUIESCAT.

FAIR is her cottage in its place,  
Where yon broad water sweetly slow-  
ly glides.  
It sees itself from thatch to base  
Dream in the sliding tides.

And fairer she, but ah how soon to die !  
 Her quiet dream of life this hour  
 may cease.  
 Her peaceful being slowly passes by  
 To some more perfect peace.

### THE SAILOR BOY.

HE rose at dawn and, fired with hope,  
 Shot o'er the seething harbor-bar,  
 And reach'd the ship and caught the  
 rope,  
 And whistled to the morning star.  
 And while he whistled long and loud  
 He heard a fierce mermaid cry,  
 "O boy, tho' thou art young and proud,  
 I see the place where thou wilt lie."  
 "The sands and yeasty surges mix  
 In caves about the dreary bay,  
 And on thy ribs the limpet sticks,  
 And in thy heart the scrawll shal  
 play."  
 "Fool," he answered, "death is sure  
 To those that stay and those that  
 roam,  
 But I will nevermore endure  
 To sit with empty hands at home."  
 "My mother clings about my neck,  
 My sisters crying 'Stay for shame ;'  
 My father raves of death and wreck,  
 They are all to blame, they are all to  
 blame."  
 "God help me ! save I take my part  
 Of danger on the roaring sea,  
 A devil rises in my heart,  
 Far worse than any death to me."

### THE ISLET.

"WHITHER, O whither, love, shall we  
 go,  
 For a score of sweet little summers or  
 so ?"  
 The sweet little wife of the singer said,  
 On the day that followed the day she  
 was wed,  
 "Whither, O whither, love, shall we  
 go ?"  
 And the singer shaking his curly head  
 Turn'd as he sat, and struck the keys  
 There at his right with a sudden crash,  
 Singing, "And shall it be over the seas  
 With a crew that is neither rude nor  
 rash,  
 But a bevy of Eroses apple-cheek'd,  
 In a shallop of crystal ivory-beak'd,  
 With a satin sail of a ruby glow,  
 To a sweet little Eden on earth that I  
 know,  
 A mountain islet pointed and peak'd ;  
 Waves on a diamond shingle dash,  
 Cataract brooks to the ocean run,  
 Fairly-delicate palaces shine  
 Mixt with myrtle and clad with vine,  
 And overstream'd and silvery-streak'd

With many a rivulet high against the  
 Sun  
 The facets of the glorious mountain  
 flash  
 Above the valleys of palm and pine."

"Thither, O thither, love, let us go."

"No, no, no !  
 For in all that exquisite isle, my dear,  
 There is but one bird with a musical  
 throat,  
 And his compass is but one of a single  
 note,  
 That it makes one weary to hear."

"Mock me not, mock me not ! love, let  
 us go."

"No, love, no.  
 For the bud ever breaks into bloom on  
 the tree,  
 And a storm never wakes in the lonely  
 sea,  
 And a worm is there in the lonely wood,  
 That pierces the liver and blackens the  
 blood,  
 And makes it a sorrow to be."

### THE RINGLET.

"Your ringlets, your ringlets,  
 That look so golden-gay,  
 If you will give me one, but one,  
 To kiss it night and day,  
 Then never chilling touch of Time  
 Will turn it silver-gray ;  
 And then shall I know it is all true  
 gold  
 To flame and sparkle and stream as of  
 o'd,  
 Till all the comets in heaven are cold,  
 And all her stars decay."  
 "Then take it, love, and put it by ;  
 This cannot change, nor yet can I,"

### 2.

"My ringlet, my ringlet,  
 That art so golden-gay,  
 Now never chilling touch of Time  
 Can turn thee silver-gray ;  
 And a lad may wink, and a girl may  
 hint,  
 And a fool may say his say ;  
 For my doubts and fears were all amiss,  
 And I swear henceforth by this and  
 this,  
 That a doubt will only come for a kiss  
 And a fear to be kiss'd away."  
 "Then kiss it, love, and put it by :  
 If this can change, why so can I."

### II.

O Ringlet, O Ringlet,  
 I kiss'd you night and day,  
 And Ringlet, O Ringlet,  
 You still are golden-gay,  
 But Ringlet, O Ringlet,  
 You should be silver-gray :  
 For what is this which now I'm told

I that took you for true gold,  
She that gave you's bought and sold,  
Sold, sold.

## 2.

O Ringlet, O Ringlet  
She blush'd a rosy red,  
When Ringlet, O Ringlet,  
She clipt you from her head,  
And Ringlet, O Ringlet,  
She gave you me, and said,  
"Come kiss it, love, and put it by:  
If this can change, why so can I."  
O fie, you golden nothing, fie  
You golden lie.

## 3.

O Ringlet, O Ringlet,  
I count you much to blame,  
For Ringlet, O Ringlet,  
You put me much to shame,  
So Ringlet, O Ringlet,  
I doom you to the flame.  
For what is this which now I learn,  
Has given all my faith a turn?  
Burn, you glossy heretic, burn,  
Burn, burn.

## A WELCOME TO ALEXANDRA.

MARCH 7, 1863.

SEA-KINGS'daughter from over the sea,  
Alexandra!  
Saxon and Norman and Dane are we,  
But all of us Danes in our welcome of  
thee,

Alexandra!  
Welcome her, thunders of fort and of  
fleet!

Welcome her, thundering cheer of the  
street!

Welcome her, all things youthful and  
sweet,

Scatter the blossom under her feet!  
Break, happy land, into earlier flowers!  
Make music, O bird, in the new-budded  
bowers!

Blazon your mottoes of blessing and  
prayer!

Welcome her, welcome her, all that is  
ours!

Warble, O bugle, and trumpet, blare!  
Flags, flutter out upon turrets and tow-  
ers!

Flames, on the windy headland flare!  
Utter your jubilee, steeple and spire!  
Clash, ye bells, in the merry March  
air!

Flash, ye cities, in rivers of fire!  
Rush to the roof, sudden rocket, and  
higher

Melt into stars for the land's desire!  
Roll and rejoice, jubilant voice,  
Roll as a ground-swell dash'd on the  
strand,

Roar as the sea when he welcomes the  
land,

And welcome her, welcome the land's  
desire,  
The sea-king's daughter as happy as  
fair,  
Blissful bride of a blissful heir,  
Bride of the heir of the kings of the  
sea,—  
O joy to the people, and joy to the  
throne,  
Come to us, love us and make us your  
own:  
For Saxon or Dane or Norman we,  
Teuton or Celt, or whatever we be,  
We are each all Dane in our welcome  
of thee,

Alexandra!

## DEDICATION.

DEAR, near and true — no truer Time  
himself  
Can prove you, tho' he make you ever-  
more  
Dearer and nearer, as the rapid of life  
Shoots to the fall — take this, and pray  
that he,  
Who wrote it, honoring your sweet faith  
in him,  
May trust himself; and spite of praise  
and scorn,  
As one who feels the immeasurable  
world,  
Attain the wise indifference of the wise;  
And after Autumn past — if left to  
pass  
His autumn into seeming-leafless  
days —  
Draw toward the long frost and longest  
night,  
Wearing his wisdom lightly, like the  
fruit  
Which in our winter woodland looks a  
flower.\*

## EXPERIMENTS.

## BOADICEA.

WHILE about the shore of Mona those  
Neronian legionaries  
Burnt and broke the grove and altar of  
the Druid and Druidess,  
Far in the East Boadicea, standing  
loftly charioted,  
Mad and maddening all that heard her  
in her fierce volubility,  
Girt by half the tribes of Britain, near  
the colony Camulodune,  
Yell'd and shriek'd between her daugh-  
ters o'er a wild confederacy.

"They that scorn the tribes and call  
us Britain's barbarous populates,  
Did they hear me, would they listen,  
did they pity me supplicating?  
Shall I heed them in their anguish?  
shall I brook to be supplicated?"

\* The fruit of the Spindle-tree (*Eunonymus  
Europæus*.)

Hear Icenian, Catiuechlanian, hear  
 Coritanian, Trinobant !  
 Must their ever-ravening eagle's beak  
 and talon annihilate us ?  
 Tear the noble heart of Britain, leave  
 it gorily quivering ?  
 Bark an answer, Britain's raven ! bark  
 and blacken innumerable,  
 Blacken round the Roman carrion,  
 make the carcass a skeleton,  
 Kite and kestrel, wolf and wolfkin,  
 from the wilderness, wallow in it,  
 Till the face of Bel be brighten'd, Tara-  
 nis be propitiated !  
 Lo their colony half-defended ! lo their  
 colony, C  mulod  ne !  
 There the horde of Roman robbers mock  
 at a barbarous adversary.  
 There the hive of Roman liars worship  
 a gluttonous emperor-idiot.  
 Such is Rome, and this her deity : hear  
 it, Spirit of C  ssiv  laun !

"Hear it, Gods ! the Gods have heard  
 it, O Icenian, O Coritanian !  
 Doubt not ye the Gods have answer'd,  
 Catiuechlanian, Trinobant.  
 These have told us all their anger in  
 miraculous utterances,  
 Thunder, a flying fire in heaven, a mur-  
 mur heard a  rially,  
 Phantom sound of blows descending,  
 moan of an enemy massacred,  
 Phantom wail of women and children,  
 multitudinous agonies.  
 Bloodily flowed the Tamesa rolling  
 phantom bodies of horses and  
 men ;  
 Then the phantom colony smoulder'd  
 on the reflux estuary ;  
 Lastly yonder yester-even, suddenly  
 giddily tottering —  
 There was one who watch'd and told  
 me — down their statue of Victory  
 fell.  
 Lo their precious Roman bantling, lo  
 the colony C  mulod  ne,  
 Shall we teach it a Roman lesson ? shall  
 we care to be pitiful ?  
 Shall we deal with it as an infant ?  
 shall we dandle it amorously ?

"Hear Icenian, Catiuechlanian, hear  
 Coritanian, Trinobant !  
 While I roved about the forest, long  
 and bitterly meditating,  
 There I heard them in the darkness, at  
 the mystical ceremony,  
 Loosely robed in flying raiment, sang  
 the terrible prophetesses.  
 'Fear not, isle of blowing woodland,  
 isle of silvery parapets !  
 Tho' the Roman eagle shadow thee, tho'  
 the gathering enemy narrow  
 thee,  
 Thou shalt wax and he shall dwindle,  
 thou shalt be the mighty one  
 yet !  
 Thine the liberty, thine the glory, thine  
 the deeds to be celebrated,

Thine the myriad-rolling ocean, light  
 and shadow illimitable,  
 Thine the lands of lasting summer,  
 many-blossoming Paradises,  
 Thine the North and thine the South  
 and thine the battle-thunder of  
 God.'

So they chanted : how shall Britain  
 light upon auguries happier ?

So they chanted in the darkness, and  
 there cometh a victory now.

"Hear Icenian, Catiuechlanian, hear  
 Coritanian, Trinobant !

Me the wife of rich Prasutagus, me the  
 lover of liberty,

Me they seized and me they tortured,  
 me they lash'd and humiliated,

M   the sport of ribald Veterans, mine  
 of ruffian violators !

See they sit, they hide their faces, mis-  
 erable in ignominy !

Wherefore in me burns an anger, not  
 by blood to be satiated.

Lo the palaces and the temple, lo the  
 colony C  mulod  ne !

There they ruled, and thence they  
 wasted all the flourishing terri-  
 tory,

Thither at their will they haled the yel-  
 low-ringletted Britoness —

Bloodily, bloodily fall the battle-axe,  
 unexhausted, inexorable.

Shout Icenian, Catiuechlanian, shout  
 Coritanian, Trinobant,

Till the victim hear within and yearn  
 to hurry precipitously

Like the leaf in a roaring whirlwind,  
 like the smoke in a hurricane  
 whirl'd.

Lo the colony, there they rioted in the  
 city of C  nobeline !

There they drank in cups of emerald,  
 there at tables of ebony lay,

Rolling on their purple couches in  
 their tender effeminacy.

There they dwelt and there they rioted ;  
 there — there — they dwell no  
 more.

Burst the gates, and burn the palaces,  
 break the works of the statu-  
 ary.

Take the hoary Roman head and shat-  
 ter it, hold it abominable,

Cut the Roman boy to pieces in his lust  
 and voluptuousness,

Lash the maiden into swooning, me  
 they lash'd and humiliated,

Chop the breasts from off the mother,  
 dash the brains of the little one  
 out,

Up my Britons, on my chariot, on my  
 chargers, trample them under  
 us."

So the Queen Bo  dic  a, standing  
 loftily charioted,

Brandishing in her hand a dart and  
 rolling glances lioness-like,

Yell'd and shriek'd between her daugh-  
 ters in her fierce volubility.

## SPECIMEN OF A TRANSLATION OF THE ILIAD. 215

Till her people all around the royal  
 chariot agitated,  
 Madly dash'd the darts together, writh-  
 ing barbarous lineaments,  
 Made the noise of frosty woodlands,  
 when they shiver in January,  
 Roar'd as when the rolling breakers  
 boom and blanch on the preci-  
 pices,  
 Yell'd as when the winds of winter tear  
 an oak on a promontory.  
 So the silent colony hearing her tumul-  
 tuous adversaries  
 Clash the darts and on the buckler beat  
 with rapid unanimous hand,  
 Thought on all her evil tyrannies, all  
 her pitiless avarice,  
 Till she felt the heart within her fall  
 and flutter tremulously,  
 Then her pulses at the clamoring of her  
 enemy fainted away.  
 Out of evil evil flourishes, out of tyr-  
 anny tyranny buds.  
 Ran the land with Roman slaughter,  
 multitudinous agonies.  
 Perish'd many a maid and matron,  
 many a valorous legionary.  
 Fell the colony, city, and citadel, Lon-  
 don, Verulam, Camulodune.

### IN QUANTITY.

MILTON.

*Alcaics.*

**O MIGHTY-MOUTH'D** inventor of har-  
 monies,  
 O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,  
 God-gifted organ-voice of England,  
 Milton, a name to resound for ages;  
 Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,  
 Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armo-  
 ries,  
 Tower, as the deep-domed empyrean  
 Rings to the roar of an angel onset—  
 Me rather all that bowery loneliness,  
 The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,  
 And bloom profuse and cedar arches  
 Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,  
 Where some refulgent sunset of India  
 Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,  
 And crimson-hued the stately palm-  
 woods  
 Whisper in odorous heights of even.

*Hendecasyllabics.*

**O YOU** chorus of indolent reviewers,  
 Irresponsible, indolent reviewers,  
 Look, I come to the test, a tiny poem  
 All composed in a metre of Catullus,  
 All in quantity, careful of my motion,  
 Like the skater on ice that hardly bears  
 him,  
 Lest I fall unawares before the people,  
 Waking laughter in indolent reviewers.  
 Should I flounder awhile without a  
 tumble  
 Thro' this metrification of Catullus,  
 They should speak to me not without a  
 welcome,

All that chorus of indolent reviewers.  
 Hard, hard, hard is it, only not to tum-  
 ble,  
 So fantastical is the dainty metre.  
 Wherefore slight me not wholly, nor  
 believe me  
 Too presumptuous, indolent reviewers.  
 Oblatant Magazines, regard me rather—  
 Since I blush to belaud myself a mo-  
 ment—  
 As some rare little rose, a piece of in-  
 most  
 Horticultural art, or half coquette-like  
 Maiden not to be greeted unbenignly.

### SPECIMEN OF A TRANSLATION OF THE ILIAD IN BLANK VERSE.

So Hector said, and sea-like roar'd his  
 host;  
 Then loosed their sweating horses from  
 the yoke,  
 And each beside his chariot bound his  
 own;  
 And oxen from the city, and goodly  
 sheep  
 In haste they drove, and honey-hearted  
 wine  
 And bread from out the houses brought,  
 and heap'd  
 Their firewood, and the winds from off  
 the plain  
 Roll'd the rich vapor far into the hea-  
 ven.  
 And these all night upon the bridge\* of  
 war  
 Sat glorying; many a fire before them  
 blazed:  
 As when in heaven the stars about the  
 moon  
 Look beautiful, when all the winds are  
 laid,  
 And every height comes out, and jut-  
 ting peak  
 And valley, and the immeasurable  
 heavens  
 Break open to their highest, and all the  
 stars  
 Shine, and the Shepherd gladdens in  
 his heart:  
 So many a fire between the ships and  
 stream  
 Of Xanthus blazed before the towers of  
 Troy,  
 A thousand on the plain; and close by  
 each  
 Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire;  
 And champing golden grain, the horses  
 stood  
 Hard by their chariots, waiting for the  
 dawn.]

*Iliad* VIII. 542-561.

\* Or, ridge.

† Or more literally,—

And eating hoary grain and pulse the  
 steeds  
 Stood by their cars, waiting the throne'd  
 morn.

1865.—1866.

I stood on a tower in the wet,  
And new Year and old Year met,  
And winds were roaring and blowing;  
And I said, "O years, that meet in tears,  
Have ye aught that is worth the know-  
ing?"

Science enough and exploring,  
Wanderers coming and going,  
Matter enough for deploring,  
But aught that is worth the know-  
ing?"

Seas at my feet were flowing,  
Waves on the shingle pouring,  
Old Year roaring and blowing,  
And New Year blowing and roaring.

### THE OLD SEAT.

DEAR Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
How strange with you once more to  
meet,

To hold your hand, to hear your voice,  
To sit beside you on this seat!  
You mind the time we sat here last?—  
Two little children-lovers we,  
Each loving each with simple faith,  
I all to you—you all to me.

Ah! Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
We sit together now as then;  
I press your hand, you meet my glance,  
We seem as if we loved again.  
But in my heart I feel the truth,  
The dear old times have passed away:  
The love that once possessed our souls  
We do but simulate to-day.

Since last we met my Lady Vere,  
You've grown in years and culture  
too,  
And, putting childish things away,  
Have ceased to be sincere and true,  
Naught caring for a single soul,  
You spare no trouble, reck no pain,  
To add another name unto  
The bead-roll of the hearts you've  
slain.

To you, my Lady Vere de Vere,  
What is it that a heart may break?  
You had no hazard in the game—  
He should have played with equal  
stake.  
You did but seek to while away  
The slow hours of an idle night;  
The fault lay with the fool who failed  
To read your character aright.

But, Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
You make your wares by far too  
cheap;  
Your net claims all as fish that comes  
Within the limit of its sweeps.  
You sit beside me here to-day,  
You try to make me love again  
But I am safe the while I think  
You've sat thus with a score of men.

Still, Lady Clara, Clara, dear,  
Beneath your finished mask I see  
The gentle heart, the honest mind,  
That made you once so dear to me.  
Your voice is still as sweet as then,  
Your face is still as pure and good:  
I see the graces of my love  
All ripened in her womanhood.  
If some day, Clara Vere de Vere,  
You weary of the counterfeit,  
And look with yearning back upon  
The old times linked with this seat—  
If you would change your fleeting love  
For one true love for evermore,  
Then we will come and see this place  
And sit together, as of yore.  
But meanwhile, Lady Vere de Vere,  
Of me win all renown you may;  
A plaything fresh my heart for you,  
A new world for your sovereign sway  
Bring all your practised charms in  
play,  
Shoot all your darts, they cannot  
hurt;  
For when we meet I clothe me in  
The proved chain-armor of a flirt.

### THE VICTIM.

I.

A PLAGUE upon the people fell,  
A famine after laid them low,  
Then thorpe and byre arose in fire.  
For on them brake the sudden foe  
So thick they died the people cried  
"The Gods are moved against the  
land."

The Priest in horror about his altar  
To Thor and Odin lifted a hand:  
"Help us from famine  
And plague and strife!  
What would you have of us?  
Human life?  
Were it our nearest,  
Were it our dearest,  
(Answer, O answer)  
We give you his life."

II.

But still the foeman spoil'd and burn'd  
And cattlo died, and deer in wood,  
And bird in air, and fishes turn'd  
And whiten'd all the rolling flood;  
And dead men lay all over the way,  
Or down in a furrow scathed with  
flame:  
And ever and aye the Priesthood  
moan'd  
Till at last it seem'd that an answer  
came:  
"The King is happy  
In child and wife;  
Take you his dearest,  
Give us a life."

III.

The Priest went out by heath and hill,  
The King was hunting in the wild;  
They found the mother sitting still;

She cast her arms about the child.  
The child was only eight summers old,  
His beauty still with his years increased,  
His face was ruddy, his hair was gold,  
He seem'd a victim due to the priest.  
The Priest beheld him,  
And cried with joy,  
"The Gods have answer'd:  
We give them the boy,"

VI.

The King return'd from out the wild,  
He bore but little game in hand;  
The mother said "They have taken  
the child  
To spill his blood and heal the land;  
The land is sick, the people diseased,  
And blight and famine on all the lea;  
The holy Gods, they must be appeased,  
So I pray you tell the truth to me.  
They have taken our son,  
They will have his life.  
Is he your dearest?  
Or I, the wife?"

V.

The King bent low, with hand on brow,  
He stay'd his arms upon his knee:  
"O wife, what use to answer now?  
For now the Priest has judged for  
me."  
The King was shaken with holy fear:  
"The Gods," he said, "would have  
chosen well;  
Yet both are near, and both are dear,  
And which the dearest I cannot  
tell!"  
But the Priest was happy,  
His victim won:  
"We have his dearest,  
His only son!"

VI.

The rites prepared, the victim bared,  
The knife uprising toward the blow,  
To the altar-stone she sprang alone,  
"Me, not my darling, no!"  
He caught her away with a sudden cry;  
Suddenly from him brake his wife,  
And shrieking "I am his dearest, I —  
I am his dearest!" rush'd on the  
knife.  
And the Priest was happy,  
"O, Father Odin,  
We give you a life.  
Which was his nearest?  
Who was his dearest?  
The Gods have answer'd;  
We give them the wife!"

LUCRETIVS.

LUCILIA, wedded to Lucretius, found  
Her master cold; for when the morn-  
ing flush  
Of passion and the first embrace had  
died

Between them, tho' he loved her none  
the less,  
Yet often when the woman heard his  
foot  
Return from paces in the field, and  
ran  
To greet him with a kiss, the master  
took  
Small notice, or austere, for—his  
mind  
Half buried in some weightier agru-  
ment.  
Or fancy-borne perhaps upon the rise  
And long roll of the Hexameter—he  
past  
To turn and ponder those three hun-  
dred scrolls  
Left by the Teacher whom he held  
divine.  
She brook'd it not; but wrathful, pet-  
ulant  
Dreaming some rival, sought and found  
a witch  
Who brew'd the philtre which had  
power, they said,  
To lead an errant passion home again.  
And this, at times, she mingled with  
his drink,  
And this destroy'd him; for the wicked  
broth  
Confused the chemic labor of the blood,  
And tickling the brute brain within  
the man's  
Made havoc among those tender cells,  
and check'd  
His power to shape: he loathed him  
self; and once  
After a tempest woke upon a morn  
That mock'd him with returning calm,  
and cried;

"Storm in the night! for thrice I  
heard the rain  
Rushing; and once the flash of a thun-  
derbolt—  
Methought I never saw so fierce a fork —  
Struck out the streaming mountain-  
side, and show'd  
A riotous confluence of watercourses  
Blanching and billowing in a hollow  
of it,  
Where all but yester-eve was dusty-dr—

"Storm, and what dreams, ye holy  
Gods, what dreams!  
For thrice I waken'd after dreams.  
Perchance  
We do but recollect the dreams that  
come  
Just ere the waking: terrible! for it  
seem'd  
A void was made in Nature; all her  
bonds  
Crack'd; and I saw the flaring atom-  
streams  
And torrents of her myriad universe,  
Ruining along the illimitable inane,  
Fly on to clash together again, and  
make  
Another and another frame of things

For ever : that was mine, my dream, I  
 knew it—  
 Of and belonging to me, as the dog  
 With inward yelp and restless forefoot  
 plies  
 His function of the woodland : but the  
 next !  
 I thought that all the blood by Sylla  
 shed  
 Came driving rainlike down again on  
 earth,  
 And where it dash'd the reddening  
 meadow, sprang  
 No dragon warriors from Cadmean  
 teeth,  
 For these I thought my dream would  
 show to me,  
 But girls, Hetaïrai, curious in their art,  
 Hired animalisms, vile as those that  
 made  
 The mulberry-faced Dictator's orgies  
 worse  
 Than aught they fable of the quiet  
 Gods.  
 And hands they mixt, and yell'd and  
 round me drove  
 In narrowing circles till I yell'd again  
 Half-suffocated, and sprang up, and  
 saw—  
 Was it the first beam of my latest day?

“ Then, then, from utter gloom stood  
 out the breasts,  
 The breasts of Helen, and hoveringly  
 a sword  
 Now over and now under, now direct,  
 Pointed itself to pierce, but sank down  
 shamed  
 At all that beauty ; and as I stared, a  
 fire,  
 The fire that left a roofless Ilium,  
 Shot out of them, and scorch'd me that  
 I woke.

“ Is this thy vengeance, holy Venus,  
 thine,  
 Because I would not one of thine own  
 doves,  
 Not ev'n a rose, were offer'd to thee ?  
 thine,  
 Forgetful how my rich procœmion  
 makes  
 Thy glory fly along the Italian field,  
 In lays that will outlast thy Deity ?

“ Deity ? nay, thy worshippers. My  
 tongue  
 Trips, or I speak profanely. Which of  
 these  
 Angers thee most, or angers thee at all ?  
 Not if thou be'st of those who, far  
 aloof  
 From envy, hate and pity, and spite  
 and scorn,  
 Live the great life which all our great-  
 est fain  
 Would follow, centred in eternal calm.

“ Nay, if thou canst, O Goddess, like  
 ourselves

Touch, and be touch'd, then would I  
 cry to thee  
 To kiss thy Mavors, roll thy tender  
 arms  
 Round him, and keep him from the  
 lust of blood  
 That makes a steaming slaughter-  
 house of Rome.

“ Ay, but I meant not thee ; I meant  
 not her,  
 Whom all the pines of Ida shook to  
 see  
 Slide from that quiet heaven of hers,  
 and tempt  
 The Trojan, while his neat-herds were  
 abroad ;  
 Nor her that o'er her wounded hunter  
 wept  
 Her Deity false in human-amorous  
 tears ;  
 Nor whom her beardless apple-arbiter  
 Decided fairest. Rather, O ye Gods,  
 Poet-like, as the great Sicilian called  
 Calliope to grace his golden verse—  
 Ay, and this Kypris also—did I take  
 That popular name of thine to shadow  
 forth  
 The all-generating powers and genial  
 heat  
 Of Nature, when she strikes thro' the  
 thick blood  
 Of cattle, and light is large, and lambs  
 are glad  
 Nosing the mother's udder, and the  
 bird  
 Makes his heart voice amid the blaze  
 of flowers :  
 Which things appear the work of  
 mighty Gods.

“ The Gods ! and if I go my work is  
 left  
 Unfinish'd — if I go. The Gods, who  
 haunt  
 The lucid interspace of world and  
 world,  
 Where never creeps a cloud, or moves  
 a wind,  
 Nor ever falls the least white star of  
 snow,  
 Nor ever lowest roll of thunder moans,  
 Nor sound of human sorrow mounts to  
 mar  
 Their sacred everlasting calm ! and  
 such,  
 Not all so fine, nor so divine a calm,  
 Not such, nor all unlike it, man may  
 gain  
 Letting his own life go. The Gods,  
 the Gods !  
 If all be atoms, how then should the  
 Gods  
 Being atomic not be dissoluble,  
 Not follow the great law ? My master  
 held  
 That Gods there are, for all men so  
 believe.  
 I prest my footsteps into his, and meant  
 Surely to lead my Memmius in a train

Of flowery clauses onward to the proof  
That Gods there are, and deathless.  
Meant? I meant?  
I have forgotten what I meant: my  
mind  
Stumbles, and all my faculties are  
lamed.

"Look where another of our Gods,  
the Sun,  
Apollo, Delius, or of older use  
All-seeing Hyperion—what you will—  
Has mounted yonder; since he never  
sware,  
Except his wrath were wreak'd on  
wretched man,  
That he would only shine among the  
dead  
Hereafter; tales! for never yet on  
earth  
Could dead flesh creep, or bits of  
roasting ox  
Moan round the spit—nor knows he  
what he sees;  
King of the East altho' he seem, and  
girt  
With song and flame and fragrance,  
slowly lifts  
His golden feet on those empurpled  
stairs  
That climb into the windy halls of  
heaven:  
And here he glances on an eye new-  
born,  
And gets for greeting but a wail of  
pain;  
And here he stays upon a freezing orb  
That fain would gaze upon him to the  
last;  
And here upon a yellow eyelid fall'n  
And closed by those who mourn a  
friend in vain,  
Not thankful that his troubles are no  
more.  
And me, altho' his fire is on my face  
Blinding, he sees not, nor at all can tell  
Whether I mean this day to end myself,  
Or lend an ear to Plato where he says,  
That men like soldiers may not quit  
the post  
Allotted by the Gods: but he that  
holds  
The Gods are careless, wherefore need  
he care  
Greatly for them, nor rather plunge at  
once,  
Being troubled, wholly out of sight,  
and sink  
Past earthquake—ay, and gout and  
stone, that break  
Body toward death, and palsy, death-  
in-life,  
And wretched age—and worst disease  
of all,  
These prodigies of myriad nakednesses,  
And twisted shapes of lust, unspeak-  
able,  
Abominable, strangers at my hearth  
Not welcome, harpies miring every  
dish,

The phantom husks of something  
foully done,  
And fleeting thro' the boundless uni-  
verse,  
And blasting the long quiet of my  
breast  
With animal heat and dire insanity?"

"How should the mind, except it  
loved them, clasp  
These idols to herself? or do they fly  
Now thinner, and now thicker, like the  
flakes  
In a fall of snow, and so press in, per-  
force  
Of multitude, as crowds that in an  
hour  
Of civic tumult jam the doors, and bear  
The keepers down, and throng, their  
rags and they,  
The basest, far into that council-hall  
Where sit the best and stateliest of the  
land?"

"Can I not fling this horror off me  
again,  
Seeing with how great ease Nature can  
smile,  
Balmier and nobler from her bath of  
storm,  
At random ravage? and how easily  
The mountain there has cast his cloudy  
slough,  
Now towering o'er him in serenest air,  
A mountain o'er a mountain,—ay, and  
within  
All hollow as the hopes and fears of  
men?  
"But who was he, that in the garden  
snared  
Picus and Faunus, rustic Gods? a tale  
To laugh at—more to laugh at in my-  
self—  
For look! what is it? there? yon  
arbutus  
Totters; a noiseless riot underneath  
Strikes through the wood, sets all the  
tops quivering—  
The mountain quickens into Nymph  
and Faun;  
And here an Orcad—how the sun de-  
lights  
To glance and shift about her slippery  
sides,  
And rosy knees and supple rounded-  
ness,  
And budded bosom-peaks—who this  
way runs  
Before the rest—A satyr, a satyr, see,  
Follows; but him I proved impossible;  
Two-natured is no nature; yet he draws  
Nearer and nearer, and I scan him now  
Beastlier than any phantom of his kind  
That ever butted his rough brother-  
brute  
For lust or lusty blood or provender:  
I hate, abhor, spit, sicken at him; and  
she  
Loathes him as well; such a precipi-  
tate heel,

Fledged as it were with Mercury's  
 ankle-wing,  
 Whirls her to me : 'but will she fling  
 herself,  
 Shameless upon me ? Catch her, goat-  
 foot : nay,  
 Hide, hide them, million-myrtdled wil-  
 derness,  
 And cavern-shadowing laurels, hide !  
 do I wish—  
 What ?—that the bush were leafless ?  
 or to overwhelm  
 All of them in one massacre ! O ye  
 Gods,  
 I know you careless, yet, behold, to you  
 From childly wont and ancient use I  
 call—  
 I thought I lived securely as your-  
 selves—  
 No lewdness, narrowing envy, monkey-  
 spite,  
 No madness of ambition, avarice, none :  
 No larger feast than under plane or  
 pine  
 With neighbors laid along the grass, to  
 take  
 Only such cups as left us friendly-  
 warm,  
 Affirming each his own philosophy—  
 Nothing to mar the sober majesties  
 Of settled, sweet, Epicurean life.  
 But now it seems some unseen monster  
 lays  
 His vast and filthy hands upon my will,  
 Wrenching it backward into his ; and  
 spoils  
 My bliss in being ; and t was not great ;  
 For save when shutting reasons up in  
 rhythm,  
 Or Heliconian honey in living words,  
 To make a truth less harsh, I often  
 grew  
 Tired of so much within our little life,  
 Or of so little in our little life—  
 Poor little life that toddles half an  
 hour  
 Crown'd with a flower or two, and there  
 an end—  
 And since the nobler pleasure seems to  
 fade,  
 Why should I, beastlike as I find my-  
 self,  
 Not manlike end myself ?—our privi-  
 lege—  
 What beast has heart to do it ? And  
 what man,  
 What Roman would be dragg'd in tri-  
 umph thus ?  
 Not I : not he, who bears one name  
 with her  
 Whose death-blow struck the dateless  
 doom of kings,  
 When, brooking not the Tarquin in her  
 veins,  
 She made her blood in sight of Colla-  
 tine  
 And all his peers, flushing the guiltless  
 air,  
 Spout from the maiden fountain in her  
 heart.

And from it sprang the Common-  
 wealth, which breaks  
 As I am breaking now !

"And therefore now  
 Let her, that is the womb and tomb of  
 all,  
 Great Nature, take, and forcing far  
 apart  
 Those blind beginnings that have made  
 me man  
 Dash them anew together at her will  
 Through all her cycles—into man once  
 more,  
 Or beast or bird or fish, or opulent  
 flower :  
 But till this cosmic order everywhere  
 Shatter'd into one earthquake in one  
 day  
 Cracks all to pieces,—and that hour  
 perhaps  
 Is not so far when momentary man  
 Shall seem no more a something to  
 himself,  
 But he, his hopes and hates, his homes  
 and fanes,  
 And even his bones long laid within  
 the grave,  
 The very sides of the grave itself shall  
 pass,  
 Vanishing, atom and void, atom and  
 void,  
 Into the unseen forever,—till that hour,  
 My golden work in which I told a truth  
 That stays the rolling Ixionian wheel  
 And numbs the Fury's ringlet-snake,  
 and plucks  
 The mortal soul from out immortal  
 hell,  
 Shall stand : ay, surely : then it fails  
 at last  
 And perishes as I must ; for O Thou,  
 Passionless bride, divine Tranquility,  
 Yearn'd after by the wisest of the wise,  
 Who fail to find thee, being as thou art  
 Without one pleasure and without one  
 pain,  
 Howbeit I know thou surely must be  
 mine  
 Or soon or late, yet out of season, thus  
 I woo thee roughly, for thou carest not  
 How roughly men may woo thee so they  
 win—  
 Thus—thus : the soul flies out and dies  
 in the air."

With that he drove the knife into his  
 side :  
 She heard him raging, heard him fall ;  
 ran in,  
 Beat breast, tore hair, cried out upon  
 herself  
 As having fail'd in duty to him, shriek'd  
 That she but meant to win him back,  
 fell on him,  
 Clasp'd, kiss'd him, wail'd : he an-  
 swer'd, "Care not thou !  
 Thy duty ? What is duty ? Fare thee  
 well !"

# THREE SONNETS TO A COQUETTE.

29

## SONG.

My life is full of weary days,  
But good things have not kept aloof,  
Nor wandered into other ways:  
I have not lack'd thy mild reproof,  
Nor golden largess of thy praise.

And now shake hands across the brink  
Of that deep grave to which I go:  
Shake hands once more : I cannot sink  
So far—far down, but I shall know  
The voice, and answer from below.

## THE CAPTAIN.

### A LEGEND OF THE NAVY.

He that only rules by terror  
Doeth grievous wrong.  
Deep as Hell I count his error,  
Let him hear my song.  
Brave the Captain was : the seamen  
Made a gallant crew,  
Gallant sons of English freemen,  
Sailors bold and true.  
But they hated his oppression,  
Stern he was and rash ;  
So for every light transgression  
Doom'd them to the lash.  
Day by day more harsh and cruel  
Seem'd the Captain's mood.  
Secret wrath like smother'd fuel  
Burnt in each man's blood.  
Yet he hoped to purchase glory,  
Hoped to make the name  
Of his vessel great in story,  
Wheresoe'er he came.  
So they past by capes and islands,  
Many a harbor-mouth,  
Sailing under palmy highlands  
Far within the South.  
On a day when they were going  
O'er the lone expanse,  
In the north, her canvas flowing,  
Rose a ship of France.  
Then the Captain's color heighten'd,  
Joyful came his speech :  
But a cloudy gladness lighten'd  
In the eyes of each.  
"Chase," he said : the ship flew for-  
ward,  
And the wind did blow ;  
Stately, lightly, went she Norward,  
Till she near'd the foe.  
Then they look'd at him they hated,  
Had what they desired :  
Mute with folded arms they waited—  
Not a gun was fired.  
But they heard the foe'sman's thunder  
Roaring out their doom ;  
All the air was torn in sunder,  
Crashing went the boom,  
Spars were splinter'd, decks were shat-  
ter'd,  
Bullets fell like rain ;  
Over mast and deck were scatter'd  
Blood and brains of men.

Spars were splinter'd ; decks were  
broken :  
Every mother's son—  
Down they dropt—no word was spo-  
ken—  
Each beside his gun.  
On the decks as they were lying,  
Were their faces grim.  
In their blood, as they lay dying,  
Did they smile on him.  
Those, in whom he had reliance  
For his noble name,  
With one smile of still defiance  
Sold him unto shame.  
Shame and wrath his heart confound-  
ed,  
Pale he turn'd and red,  
Till himself was deadly wounded  
Falling on the dead.  
Dismal error ! fearful slaughter !  
Years have wander'd by,  
Side by side beneath the water  
Crew and Captain lie ;  
There the sunlit ocean tosses  
O'er them mouldering,  
And the lonely seabird crosses  
With one waft of the wing.

## THREE SONNETS TO A COQUETTE.

### I.

CARESS'D or chidden by the dainty  
hand,  
And singing airy trifles this or that,  
Light Hope at Beauty's call would  
perch and stand,  
And run thro' every change of sharp  
and flat ;  
And Fancy came and at her pillow  
sat,  
When sleep had bound her in his rosy  
band,  
And chased away the still-recurring  
gnat,  
And woke her with a lay from fairy  
land.  
But now they live with Beauty less and  
less,  
For Hope is other Hope and wanders  
far,  
Nor cares to lisp in love's delicious  
creeds ;  
And Fancy watches in the wilderness,  
Poor Fancy sadder than a single star,  
That sets at twilight in a land of  
reeds.

### II.

The form, the form alone is eloquent ;  
A nobler yearning never broke her  
rest  
Than but to dance and sing, be gayly  
drest,  
And win all eyes with all accomplish-  
ment :  
Yet in the waltzing-circle as we went,  
My fancy made me for a moment  
blest

To find my heart so near the beauteous  
breast  
That once had power to rob it of con-  
tent.

A moment came the tenderness of  
tears,  
The phantom of a wish that once could  
move,  
A ghost of passion that no smiles  
restore—

For ah ! the slight coquette, she can-  
not love,  
And if you kiss'd her feet a thousand  
years,  
She still would take the praise, and  
care no more.

## III.

Wan Sculptor weepst thou to take the  
cast  
Of those dead lineaments that near  
thee lie ?

O sorrowest thou, pale Painter, for the  
past,  
In painting some dead friend from  
memory ?

Weep on : beyond his object Love can  
last :  
His object lives : more cause to weep  
have I :

My tears, no tears of love, are flowing  
fast,  
No tears of love, but tears that Love  
can die.

I pledge her not in any cheerful cup,  
Nor care to sit beside her where she  
sits—

Ah pity—hint it not in human  
tones,  
But breathe it into earth and close it  
up

With secret death for ever, in the pits  
Which some green Christmas crams  
with weary bones.

MOVE eastward, happy earth, and  
leave

Yon orange sunset waning slow :  
From fringes of the faded eve,  
O, happy planet, eastward go ;

Till over thy dark shoulder glow  
Thy silver sister-world, and rise  
To glass herself in dewy eyes

That watch me from the glen below.

Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly borne,  
Dip forward under starry light,  
And move me to my marriage-morn,  
And round again to happy night.

BREAK, break, break,  
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea !  
And I would that my tongue could ut-  
ter

The thoughts that arise in me.  
O well for the fisherman's boy,  
That he shouts with his sister at play !  
O well for the sailor lad,  
That he sings in his boat on the bay.

And the stately ships go on  
To their haven under the hill ;  
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still !

Break, break, break,  
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !  
But the tender grace of a day that is  
dead  
Will never come back to me.

## THE POET'S SONG.

THE rain had fallen, the Poet arose,  
He pass'd by the town and out of the  
street,

A light wind blew from the gates of the  
sun,  
And waves of shadow went over the  
wheat,

And he sat him down in a lonely place,  
And chanted a melody loud and  
sweet,

That made the wild-swan pause in her  
cloud,  
And the lark drop down at his feet.

The swallow stopt as he hunted the  
bee.

The snake slipt under a spray,  
The wild hawk stood with the down on  
his beak,

And stared, with his foot on the prey,  
And the nightingale thought, "I have  
sung many songs,

But never a one so gay,  
For he sings of what the world will be  
When the years have died away."

## SONG.

LADY, let the rolling drums  
Beat to battle where thy warrior stands  
Now thy face across his fancy comes,  
And gives the battle to his hands.

Lady, let the trumpets blow,  
Clasp thy little babes about thy knee :  
Now their warrior father meets the foe  
And strikes him dead for thine and  
thee.

## SONG.

HOME they brought him slain with  
spears.

They brought him home at even-fall:  
All alone she sits and hears  
Echoes in his empty hall,  
Sounding on the morrow.

The Sun peep'd in from open field,  
The boy began to leap and prance,  
Rode upon his father's lance,  
Beat upon his father's shield—  
"O hush, my joy, my sorrow."

## ON A MOURNER.

## I.

NATURE, so far as in her lies,  
Imitates God, and turns her face  
To every land beneath the skies,  
Counts nothing that she meets with  
base,  
But lives and loves in every place ;

## II.

Fills out the homely quickset-screens,  
And makes the purple lilac ripe,  
Steps from her airy hill, and greens  
The swamp, where hums the dropping  
snipe,  
With moss and braided marish-pipe ;

## III.

And on thy heart a finger lays,  
Saying, "Beat quicker, for the time  
Is pleasant, and the woods and ways  
Are pleasant, and the beech and lime  
Put forth and feel a gladder clime."

## IV.

And murmurs of a deeper voice,  
Going before to some far shrine,  
Teach that sick heart the stronger  
choice,  
Till all thy life one way incline  
With one wide will that closes thine.

## V.

And when the zoning eve has died  
Where yon dark valleys wind forlorn,  
Come Hope and Memory, spouse and  
bride,  
From out the borders of the morn,  
With that fair child betwixt them  
born.

## VI.

And when no mortal motion jars  
The blackness round the tombing  
sod,  
Thro' silence and the trembling stars  
Comes Faith from tracts no feet have  
trod,  
And Virtue, like a household god

## VII.

Promising empire ; such as those  
That once at dead of night did greet  
Troy's wandering prince, so that he  
rose  
With sacrifice, while all the fleet  
Had rest by stony hills of Crete.

## NORTHERN FARMER.

## NEW STYLE.

## I.

DON'T thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as  
they canters awaäy ?  
Proputty, proputty, proputty—that 's  
what I 'ears 'em saäy.

Proputty, proputty, proputty—Sam,  
thou 's an ass for thy paains :  
Theer 's moor sense i' one o' 'is legs nor  
in all thy braains.

## II.

Woä—theer 's a crow to pluck wi' tha,  
Sam : yon 's parson's 'ouse—  
Doshn't thou know that a man mun be  
eäther a man or a mouse ?  
Time to think on it then ; for thou 'll  
be twenty to weeäk.\*  
Proputty, proputty—woä then woä—  
let ma 'ear mysén speak.

## III.

Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as beän  
a-talkin' o' thee ;  
Thou 's been talkin' to muther, an' she  
beän a tellin' it me.  
Thou 'll not marry for munny—thou 's  
sweet upo' parson's lass—  
Noä—thou 'll marry for luvv—an' we  
boäth on us thinks tha an ass.

## IV.

Seeä'd her to-daäy goä by—Saäint's-  
daäy—they was ringing the bells.  
She 's a beauty thou thinks—an' soä is  
scoors o' gells,  
Them as 'as munny an' all—wot 's a  
beauty ?—the flower as blaws.  
But proputty, proputty sticks, an' pro-  
putty, proputty graws.

## V.

Do'ant be stunt : † taäke time : I knowä  
what maäkes tha sa mad.  
Warn't I craäzed fur the lasses mysén  
when I wur a lad ?  
But I know'd a Quaäker feller as often  
'as tow'd ma this :  
"Doänt thou marry for munny, but goä  
wheer munny is !"

## VI.

An' I went wheer munny war : an' thy  
mother coom to 'and,  
Wi' lots o' munny laäfd by, an' a nice-  
tish bit o' land.  
Maäybe she warn't a beauty :—I niver  
giv it a thowt—  
But warn't she as good to cuddle an'  
kiss as a lass as 'ant nowt ?

## VII.

Parson's lass 'ant nowt, an' she weänt  
'a nowt when 'e's dead,  
Mun be a guvness, lad, or summut, and  
addle ‡ her breäd :  
Why ? fur 'e's nobbut a curate, an'  
weänt nivir git naw 'igher ;  
Au' 'u maäde the bed as 'e ligs on afoot  
'e coom'd to the shire.

## VIII.

And thin 'e coom'd to the parish wi  
lots o' 'Varsity debt,

\* This week.

† Obstinate.

‡ Earn.

Stook to his taail they did, an' 'e 'e ant  
got shut on 'em yet.  
An' 'e ligs on 'is back i' the grip, wi'  
noän to lend 'im a shove,  
Woorse nor a far-welter'd\* yowe : fur,  
Sammy, 'e married fur luvv.

## IX.

Luvv? what's luvv? thou can luvv thy  
lass an' 'er munny too,  
Maakin' 'em goä together as they've  
good right to do.  
Could'n I luvv thy muther by cause o'  
'er munny laäb by?  
Naäy—fur I luvv'd 'er a vast sight moor  
fur it: reason why.

## X.

Ay an' thy muther says thou wants to  
marry the lass,  
Cooms of a gentleman burn : an' we  
boäth on us thinks tha an' ass.  
Woä then, proputtv, wiltha?—an' as  
near as mays nowt—†  
Woä then, wiltha? dangtha!—the bees  
is as fell as owt. ‡

## XI.

Breäk me a bit o' the esh for his 'eäd,  
lad, out o' the fence!  
Gentleman burn! what's gentleman  
burn? is it shillins an' pence?  
Proputtv, proputtv 's ivrything 'ere,  
an', Sammy, I'm blest  
If it is n't the säame oop yonder, fur  
them as 'as it's the best.

## XII.

Tis'n them as 'as munny as breäks into  
'ouses an' steäls.  
Them as 'as coäts to their backs an'  
taäkes their regular meäls.  
Noä, but it's them as niver knows  
wheer a meil 's to bë 'ad.  
Taäke my word for it, Sammy, the poor  
in a loomp is bad.

## XIII.

Them or their feythers, tha sees, mun  
a bëän a laäzy lot,  
Fur work mun 'a gone to the gittin'  
whiniver munny was got.  
Feyther 'ad ammost nowt; leaästwaays  
'is munny was 'id.  
But 'e tued an' moil'd 'issén deäd, an'  
'e died a good un, 'e did.

## XIV.

Loook thou theer wheer Wrigglesby  
beck comes out by the 'ill!  
Feyther run up to the farm, an' I runs  
up to the mill;  
An' I'll run up to the brig, an' that  
thou'll live to see;  
And if thou marries a good un I'll  
leave the land to thee.

\* Or fow-welter'd,—said of a sheep lying on  
its back in the furrow.

† Makes nothing.

‡ The flies are as fierce as anything.

## XV.

Thim's my noätions, Sammy, wheerby  
I means to stick;  
But if thou marries a bad un, I'll leave  
the land to Dick.—  
Coom oop, proputtv, proputtv—that 's  
what I 'ears 'im saäy—  
Proputtv, proputtv, proputtv—cante:  
an' canter awaäy.

## THE GOLDEN SUPPER.

[This poem is founded upon a story in Boc-  
caccio.

A young lover, Julian, whose cousin and fos-  
ter-sister, Camilla, has been wedded to his friend  
and rival, Lionel, endeavors to narrate the story  
of his own love for her and the strange sequel  
of it. He speaks of having been haunted in deli-  
rium by visions and the sound of bells, some-  
times tolling for a funeral, and at last ringing  
for a marriage; but he breaks away, overcome,  
as he approaches the Event, and a witness to it  
completes the tale.]

HE flies the event: he leaves the event  
to me:

Poor Julian—how he rush'd away; the  
bells,

Those marriage-bells, echoing in ear  
and heart—

But cast a parting glance at me, you  
saw,

As who should say "continue." Well,  
he had

One golden hour—of triumph shall I  
say?

Solace at least—before he left his home.  
Would you had seen him in that hour  
of his!

He moved thro' all of it majestically—  
Restrain'd himself quite to the close—  
but now—

Whether they were his lady's mar-  
riage-bells,

Or prophets of them in his fantasy,  
I never ask'd: but Lionel and the girl  
Were wedded, and our Julian came  
again

Back to his mother's house among the  
pines.

But these, their gloom, the mountains  
and the Bay,

The whole land weigh'd him down as  
Ætna does

The Giant of Mythology: he would go,  
Would leave the land for ever, and had  
gone

Surely, but for a whisper "Go not yet,"  
Some warning, and divinely as it  
seem'd

By that which follow'd—but of this I  
deem

As of the visions that he told—the  
event

Glanced back upon them in his after  
life,

And partly made them—tho' he knew  
it not.

And thus he stay'd and would not  
look at her—  
No, not for months: but when the  
eleventh moon  
After their marriage lit the lover's Bay,  
Heard yet once more the tolling bell,  
and said,  
Would you could toll me out of life,  
but found—  
All softly as his mother broke it to  
him—  
A crueller reason than a crazy ear,  
For that low knell tolling his lady  
dead—  
Dead—and had lain three days without  
a pulse:  
All that look'd on her had pronounced  
her dead.  
And so they bore her (for in Julian's  
land  
They never nail a dumb head up in  
elm),  
Bore her free-faced to the free airs of  
heaven,  
And laid her in the vault of her own  
kin.

What did he then? not die: he is  
here and hale—  
Not plunge headforemost from the  
mountain there,  
And leave the name of Lover's Leap:  
not he:  
He knew the meaning of the whisper  
now,  
Thought that he knew it. "This, I  
stay'd for this:  
O love, I have not seen you for so long.  
Now, now, will I go down into the  
grave,  
I will be all alone with all I love,  
And kiss her on the lips. She is his no  
more:  
The dead returns to me, and I go down  
To kiss the dead."

The fancy stirr'd him so  
He rose and went, and entering the dim  
vault.  
And, making there a sudden light, be-  
held  
All round about him that which all  
will be.  
The light was but a flash, and went  
again.  
Then at the far end of the vault he saw  
His lady with the moonlight on her  
face;  
Her breast as in a shadow-prison,  
bars  
Of black and bands of silver, which the  
moon  
Struck from an open grating overhead  
High in the wall, and all the rest of  
her  
Drown'd in the gloom and horror of the  
vault.

"It was my wish," he said, "to pass,  
to sleep,

To rest, to be with her—till the great  
day  
Peal'd on us with that music which  
rights all,  
And raised us hand in hand.' And  
kneeling there  
Down in the dreadful dust that once  
was man,  
Dust, as he said, that once was loving  
hearts,  
Hearts that had beat with such a love  
as mine—  
Not such as mine, no, nor for such as  
her—  
He softly put his arm about her neck  
And kiss'd her more than once, till  
helpless death  
And silence made him bold—nay, but  
I wrong him,  
He revered his dear lady even in  
death;  
But, placing his true hand upon her  
heart,  
"O, you warm heart," he moan'd, "not  
even death  
Can chill you all at once:" then start-  
ing, thought  
His dreams had come again. "Do I  
wake or sleep?  
Or am I made immortal, or my love  
Mortal once more?" It beat—the  
heart—it beat:  
Faint—but it beat: at which his own  
began  
To pulse with such a vehemence that  
it drown'd  
The feebler motion underneath his  
hand.  
But when at last his doubts were sat-  
isfied,  
He raised her softly from the sepul-  
chre,  
And, wrapping her all over with the  
cloak  
He came in, and now striding fast, and  
now  
Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore  
Holding his golden burden in his arms,  
So bore her thro' the solitary land  
Back to the mother's house where she  
was born.

There the good mother's kindly min-  
istering,  
With half a night's appliances, recall'd  
Her fluttering life: she rais'd an eye  
that ask'd  
"Where?" till the things familiar to  
her youth  
Had made a silent answer: then she  
spoke,  
"Here! and how came I here?" and  
learning it  
(They told her somewhat rashly as I  
think)  
At once began to wander and to wail,  
"Ay, but you know that you must  
give me back:  
Send! bid him come;" but Lionel was  
away—

Stung by his loss had vanish'd, none  
knew where.

"He casts me out," she wept, "and  
goes" — a wail

That seeming something, yet was nothing,  
born

Not from believing mind, but shatter'd  
nerve,

Yet haunting Julian, as her own reproof

At some precipitance in her burial.

Then, when her own true spirit had  
return'd,

"O yes, and you," she said, "and none  
but you.

For you have given me life and love  
again,

And none but you yourself shall tell  
him of it,

And you shall give me back when he  
returns."

"Stay then a little," answer'd Julian,  
"here,

And keep yourself, none knowing, to  
yourself;

And I will do your will. I may not  
stay,

No, not an hour; but send me notice  
of him

When he returns, and then will I return,

And I will make a solemn offering of  
you

To him you love." And faintly she replied,

"And I will do *your* will, and none  
shall know."

Not know? with such a secret to be  
known.

But all their house was old and loved  
them both,

And all the house had known the  
loves of both,

Had died almost to serve them any  
way,

And all the land was waste and solitary:

And then he rode away; but after  
this,

An hour or two, Camilla's travail came  
Upon her, and that day a boy was born,  
Heir of his face and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode  
away,

And pausing at a hostel in a marsh,  
There fever seized upon him: myself

was then

Travelling that land, and meant to  
rest an hour;

And sitting down to such a base  
re-past,

It makes me angry yet to speak of it—  
I heard a groaning overhead, and

climb'd

The moulder'd stairs (for everything  
was vile)

And in a loft, with none to wait on  
him,

Found, as it seem'd, a skeleton alone.  
Raving of dead men's dust and beating  
hearts.

A dismal hostel in a dismal land,  
A flat malarian world of reed and  
rush!

But there from fever and my care  
him

Sprang up a friendship that may help  
us yet.

For while we roam'd along the dreary  
coast,

And waited for her message, piece by  
piece

I learnt the drearier story of his life;  
And, tho' he loved and honor'd Lionel,

Found that the sudden wail his lady  
made

Dwelt in his fancy: did he know her  
worth,

Her beauty even? should he not be  
taught,

Ev'n by the price that others set upon  
it,

The value of that jewel he had to  
guard?

Suddenly came her notice and we  
past,

I with our lover to his native Bay.

This love is of the brain, the mind,  
the soul:

That makes the sequel pure; tho'  
some of us

Beginning at the sequel know no more.  
Not such am I: and yet I say, the bird

That will not hear my call, however  
sweet,

But if my neighbor whistle answers  
him—

What matter? there are others in the  
wood.

Yet when I saw her (and I thought him  
crazed,

Tho' not with such a craziness as needs  
A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of  
hers—

Oh! such dark eyes! and not her eyes  
alone,

But all from these to where she  
touch'd on earth,

For such a craziness as Julian's  
seem'd

No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she  
came

To greet us, her young hero in her  
arms!

"Kiss him," she said. "You gave me  
life again.

He, but for you, had never seen it  
once.

His other father you! Kiss him, and  
then

Forgive him, if his name be Julian  
"O."

Talk of lost hopes and broken heart !  
 his own  
 Sent such a flame into his face, I  
 knew  
 Some sudden vivid pleasure hit him  
 there.

But he was all the more resolved to  
 go,  
 And sent at once to Lionel, praying  
 him  
 By that great love they both had borne  
 the dead,  
 To come and revel for one hour with  
 him  
 Before he left the land for evermore ;  
 And then to friends—they were not  
 many—who lived  
 Scatteringly about that lonely land of  
 his,  
 And bade them to a banquet of fare-  
 wells.

And Julian made a solemn feast : I  
 never  
 Sat at a costlier ; for all round his hall  
 From column on to column, as in a  
 wood,  
 Not such as here—an equatorial one,  
 Great garlands swung and blossom'd ;  
 and beneath,  
 Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of  
 Art,  
 Chalice and salver, wines that, Heaven  
 knows when,  
 Had suck'd the fire of some forgotten  
 sun  
 And kept it thro' a hundred years of  
 gloom,  
 Yet glowing in a heart of ruby—cups  
 Where nymph and god ran ever round  
 in gold—  
 Others of glass as costly—some with  
 gems  
 Movable and resettable at will  
 And trebling all the rest in value—Ah,  
 heavens !  
 Why need I tell you all?—suffice to  
 say  
 That whatsoever such a house as his,  
 And his was old, has in it rare or fair  
 Was brought before the guest : and  
 they, the guests,  
 Wonder'd at some strange light in  
 Julian's eyes  
 (I told you that he had his golden  
 hour),  
 And such a feast, ill-suited as it  
 seem'd  
 To such a time, to Lionel's loss and  
 his,  
 And that resolved self-exile from a  
 land  
 He never would revisit, such a feast  
 So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n  
 than rich,  
 But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the  
 hall

Two great funereal curtains, looping  
 down,  
 Parted a little ere they met the floor,  
 About a picture of his lady, taken  
 Some years before, and falling hid the  
 frame.  
 And just above the parting was a  
 lamp :  
 So the sweet figure folded round with  
 night  
 Seem'd stepping out of darkness with  
 a smile.

Well then—our solemn feast—we ate  
 and drank,  
 And might—the wines being of such  
 nobleness—  
 Have jested also, but for Julian's  
 eyes,  
 And something weird and wild about  
 it all :  
 What was it? for our lover seldom  
 spoke,  
 Scarce touch'd the meats ; but ever  
 and anon  
 A priceless goblet with a priceless  
 wine  
 Arising, show'd he drank beyond his  
 use ;  
 And when the feast was near an end,  
 he said :

“There is a custom in the Orient,  
 friends—  
 I read of it in Persia—when a man  
 Will honor those who feast with him,  
 he brings  
 And shows them whatsoever he ac-  
 counts  
 Of all his treasures the most beautiful,  
 Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may  
 be.  
 This custom—”

Pausing here a moment, all  
 The guests broke in upon him with  
 meeting hands  
 And cries about the banquet—“ Beau-  
 tiful !  
 Who could desire more beauty at a  
 feast ? ”

The lover answer'd, “There is more  
 than one  
 Here sitting who desires it. Laud me  
 not  
 Before my time, but hear me to the  
 close.  
 This custom steps yet further when the  
 guest  
 Is loved and honor'd to the uttermost.  
 For after he has shown him gems or  
 gold,  
 He brings and sets before him in rich  
 guise  
 That which is thrice as beautiful as  
 these,  
 The beauty that is dearest to his heart—  
 ‘O my heart's lord, would I could show  
 you,’ he says.

'Ev'n my heart too.' And I propose  
to-night  
To show you what is dearest to my  
heart,  
And my heart too.

"But solve me first a doubt.  
I knew a man, not many years ago;  
He had a faithful servant, one who  
loved  
His master more than all on earth be-  
side.  
He falling sick, and seeming close on  
death,  
His master would not wait until he  
died,  
But bade his menials bear him from  
the door,  
And leave him in the public way to  
die.  
I knew another, not so long ago,  
Who found the dying servant, took him  
home,  
And fed, and cherish'd him, and saved  
his life.  
I ask you now, should this first master  
claim  
His service, whom does it belong to?  
him  
Who thrust him out, or him who saved  
his life?"

This question, so flung down before  
the guests,  
And balanced either way by each, at  
length  
When some were doubtful how the law  
would hold,  
Was handed over by consent of all  
To one who had not spoken, Lionel.

Fair speech was his, and delicate of  
phrase.  
And he beginning languidly—his loss  
Weigh'd on him yet—but warming as  
he went,  
Glanced at the point of law, to pass it  
by,  
Affirming that as long as either lived,  
By all the laws of love and grateful-  
ness,  
The service of the one so saved was  
due  
All to the saver—adding, with a smile,  
The first for many weeks—a semi-  
smile  
As at a strong conclusion—"body and  
soul  
And life and limbs, all his to work his  
will."

Then Julian made a secret sign to  
me  
To bring Camille down before them  
all.  
And crossing her own picture as she  
came,  
And looking as much lovelier as her-  
self  
Is lovelier than all others—on her head  
A diamond circlet, and from under this

A veil, that seem'd no more than gilded  
air,  
Flying by each fine ear, an Eastern  
gauze  
With seeds of gold—so, with that grace  
of hers,  
Slow-moving as a wave against the  
wind,  
That flings a mist behind it in the sun—  
And bearing high in arms the mighty  
babe,  
The younger Julian, who himself was  
crown'd  
With roses, none so rosy as himself—  
And over all her babe and her the  
jewels  
Of many generations of his house  
Sparkled and flash'd, for he had decked  
them out  
As for a solemn sacrifice of love—  
So she came in:—I am long in telling  
it  
I never yet beheld a thing so strange,  
Sad, sweet, and strange together—  
floated in,—  
While all the guests in mute amaze-  
ment rose,—  
And slowly pacing to the middle hall,  
Before the board, there paused and  
stood, her breast  
Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her  
feet,  
Not daring yet to glance at Lionel.  
But him she carried, him nor lights nor  
feast  
Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men:  
who cared  
Only to use his own, and staring wide  
And hungering for the gilt and jewell'd  
world  
About him, look'd, as he is like to  
prove,  
When Julian goes, the lord of all he  
saw.

"My guests," said Julian: "you are  
honor'd now  
Ev'n to the uttermost: in her behold  
Of all my treasures the most beautiful,  
Of all things upon earth the dearest to  
me."  
Then waving us a sign to seat ourselves,  
Led his dear lady to a chair of state.  
And I, by Lionel sitting, saw his face  
Fire, and dead ashes and all fire again  
Thrice in a second, felt him tremble  
too,  
And heard him muttering, "So like, so  
like;  
She never had a sister. I knew none.  
Some cousin of his and hers—O God,  
so like!"  
And then he suddenly ask'd her if she  
were.  
She shook, and cast her eyes down, and  
was dumb.  
And then some other question'd if she  
came  
From foreign lands, and still she did  
not speak.

Another, if the boy were hers : but  
 she  
 To all their queries answer'd not a  
 word,  
 Which made the amazement more, till  
 one of them  
 Said, shuddering, "Her spectre!" But  
 his friend  
 Replied, in half a whisper, "Not at  
 least  
 The spectre that will speak if spoken to.  
 Terrible pity, if one so beautiful  
 Prove, as I almost dread to find her,  
 dumb!"

But Julian, sitting by her, answer'd  
 all :  
 "She is but dumb, because in her you  
 see  
 That faithful servant whom we spoke  
 about,  
 Obedient to her second master now ;  
 Which will not last. I have here to-  
 night a guest  
 So bound to me by common love and  
 loss—  
 What ! shall I bind him more ? in his  
 behalf,  
 Shall I exceed the Persian, giving him  
 That which of all things is the dearest  
 to me,  
 Not only showing ? and he himself pro-  
 nounced  
 That my rich gift is wholly mine to  
 give.

"Now all be dumb, and promise all  
 of you  
 Not to break in on what I say by word  
 Or whisper, while I show you all my  
 heart."  
 And then began the story of his love  
 As here to-day, but not so wordily—  
 The passionate moment would not suf-  
 fer that—  
 Past thro' his visions to the burial ;  
 thence  
 Down to this last strange hour in his  
 own hall ;  
 And then rose up, and with him all his  
 guests  
 Once more as by enchantment ; all but  
 he,  
 Lionel, who fain had risen, but fell  
 again,  
 And sat as if in chains—to whom he  
 said :

"Take my free gift, my cousin, for  
 your wife ;  
 And were it only for the giver's sake,  
 And tho' she seem so like the one you  
 lost,  
 Yet cast her not away so suddenly,  
 Lest there be none left here to bring  
 her back :  
 I leave this land forever." Here he  
 ceased.

Then taking his dear lady by one  
 hand,

And bearing on one arm the noble  
 babe,  
 He slowly brought them both to Lion-  
 nel.  
 And there the widower husband and  
 dead wife  
 Rnsh'd each at each with a cry, that  
 rather seem'd  
 For some new death than for a life re-  
 new'd ;  
 At this the very babe began to wail ;  
 At once they turn'd, and caught and  
 brought him in  
 To their charm'd circle, and, half kill-  
 ing him  
 With kisses, round him closed and  
 claspt again.  
 But Lionel, when at last he freed him-  
 self  
 From wife and child, and lifted up a  
 face  
 All over glowing with the sun of life,  
 And love, and boundless thanks—the  
 sight of this  
 So frighted our good friend, that turn-  
 ing to me  
 And saying, "It is over : let us go—"   
 There were our horses ready at the  
 doors—  
 We bade them no farewell, but mount-  
 ing these  
 He past forever from his native land ;  
 And I with him, my Julian, back to  
 mine.

#### WAGES.

GLORY of warrior, glory of orator,  
 glory of song,  
 Paid with a voice flying by to be lost  
 on an endless sea—  
 Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle,  
 to right the wrong—  
 Nay, but she aim'd not at glory, no  
 lover of glory she :  
 Give her the glory of going on, and still  
 to be.  
 The wages of sin is death : if the  
 wages of Virtue be dust,  
 Would she have heart to endure for  
 the life of the worm and the fly ?  
 She desires no isles of the blest, no  
 quiet seats of the just,  
 To rest in a golden grove, or to bask  
 in a summer sky :  
 Give her the wages of going on, and  
 not to die.

#### THE HIGHER PANTHEISM.

THE sun, the moon, the stars, the seas,  
 the hills and the plains —  
 Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of  
 Him who reigns ?  
 Is not the Vision He ? tho' He be not  
 that which He seems ?

Dreams are true while they last, and  
do we not live in dreams ?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of  
body and limb,  
Are they not sign and symbol of thy  
division from Him ?

Dark is the world to thee : thyself art  
the reason why ;

For is He not all but thou, that hast  
power to feel "I am I?"

Glory about thee, without thee ; and  
thou fulfillest thy doom,

Making Him broken gleams, and a  
stifed splendor and gloom.

Speak to Him thou for He hears, and  
Spirit with Spirit can meet—

Closer is He than breathing, and nearer  
than hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise : O Soul, and  
let us rejoice,

For if He thunder by law the thunder  
is yet His voice.

Law is God, say some : no God at all,  
says the fool ;

For all we have power to see is a  
straight staff bent in a pool ;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and  
the eye of man cannot see ;

But if we could see and hear, this  
Vision—were it not He ?

#### SONG.

FLOWER in the crannied wall.

I pluck you out of the crannies ;—

Hold you here, root and all, in my  
hand,

Little flower—but if I could under-  
stand

What you are, root and all, and all in  
all.

I should know what God and man is.

#### LITERARY SQUABBLES.

Alas God ! the petty fools of rhyme  
That shriek and sweat in pigmy wars  
Before the stony face of Time,  
And look'd at by the silent stars :

Who hate each other for a song,  
And do their little best to bite  
And pinch their brethren in the throng,  
And scratch the very dead for spite :

And strain to make an inch of room  
For their sweet selves, and cannot hear  
The sullen Lethe rolling doom  
On them and theirs and all things  
here :

When one small touch of Charity  
Could lift them nearer God-like state  
Than if the crowded Orb should cry  
Like those who cried Diana great :

And I too, talk, and lose the touch  
I talk of. Surely, after all,  
The noblest answer unto such  
Is perfect stillness when they brawl.

#### DEDICATION.

THESE to His Memory—since he held  
them dear,  
Perchance as finding there uncon-  
sciously  
Some image of himself—I dedicate,  
I dedicate, I consecrate with tears—  
These Idylls.

And indeed He seems to me  
Scarce other than my own ideal knight,  
"Who revered his conscience as  
his king ;  
Whose glory was, redressing human  
wrong ;  
Who spake no slander, no, nor listen'd  
to it ;  
Who loved one only and who clave to  
her—"  
Her—over all whose realms to their  
last isle,  
Commingled with the gloom of immi-  
nent war,  
The shadow of His loss drew like  
eclipse,  
Darkening the world. We have lost  
him : he is gone :

We know him now : all narrow jeal-  
ousies  
Are silent ; and we see him as he  
moved,  
How modest, kindly, all-accomplish'd,  
wise,  
With what sublime repression of him-  
self,  
And in what limits, and how tenderly ;  
Not swaying to this faction or to that ;  
Not making his high place the lawless  
perch  
Of wing'd ambitions, nor a vantage-  
ground

For pleasure ; but thro' all this tract  
of years  
Wearing the white flower of a blame-  
less life,

Before a thousand peering littlenesses,  
In that fierce light which beats upon a  
throne,

And blackens every blot : for where is  
he,

Who dares foreshadow for an only son  
A lovelier life, a more unstain'd, than  
his ?

Or how should England dreaming of  
his sons

Hope more for these than some inher-  
itance

Of such a life, a heart, a mind as thine,  
Thou noble Father of her Kings to be,  
Laborious for her people and her  
poor—

Voice in the rich dawn of an ample  
day—

Far-sighted summoner of War and  
 Waste  
 To fruitful strifes and rivalries of  
 peace—  
 Sweet nature gilded by the gracious  
 gleam  
 Of letters, dear to Science, dear to Art,  
 Dear to thy land and ours, a Prince in-  
 deed,  
 Beyond all titles, and a household  
 name,  
 Hereafter, thro' all times, Albert the  
 Good.

Break not, O woman's-heart, but still  
 endure;  
 Break not, for thou art Royal, but en-  
 dure,  
 Remembering all the beauty of that  
 star  
 Which shone so close beside Thee, that  
 ye made  
 One light together, but has past and  
 leaves  
 The Crown a lonely splendor.

May all love,  
 His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow  
 Thee,  
 The love of all Thy sons encompass  
 Thee,  
 The love of all Thy daughters cherish  
 Thee,  
 The love of all Thy people comfort  
 Thee,  
 Till God's love set Thee at his side  
 again!

#### THE COMING OF ARTHUR.

LEODOGRAN, the King of Cameliard,  
 Had one fair daughter, and none other  
 child;  
 And she was fairest of all flesh on  
 earth,  
 Guinevere, and in her his one delight.

For many a petty king ere Arthur  
 came  
 Ruled in this isle, and ever waging war  
 Each upon other, wasted all the land;  
 And still from time to time the heathen  
 host  
 Swarm'd overseas, and harried what  
 was left.  
 And so there grew great tracts of wil-  
 derness,  
 Wherein the beast was ever more and  
 more,  
 But man was less and less, till Arthur  
 came.  
 For first Aurelius lived and fought and  
 died,  
 And after him King Uther fought and  
 died,  
 But either fail'd to make the kingdom  
 one.  
 And after these King Arthur for a  
 space

And thro' the puissance of his Table  
 Round,  
 Drew all their petty principedoms under  
 him,  
 Their king and head, and made a realm,  
 and reign'd.

And thus the land of Cameliard was  
 waste,  
 Thick with wet woods, and many a  
 beast therein,  
 And none or few to scare or chase the  
 beast;  
 So that wild dog, and wolf and boar  
 and bear  
 Came night and day, and rooted in the  
 fields,  
 And wallowed in the gardens of the  
 king.  
 And ever and anon the wolf would  
 steal  
 The children and devour, but now and  
 then,  
 Her own brood lost or dead, lent her  
 fierce teat  
 To human sucklings; and the children,  
 housed  
 In her foul den, there at their meat  
 would growl,  
 And mock their foster-mother on four  
 feet,  
 Till, straighten'd, they grew up to wolf-  
 like men,  
 Worse than the wolves. And King  
 Leodogran  
 Groan'd for the Roman regions here  
 again,  
 And Cæsar's eagle: then his brother  
 king,  
 Silence, assail'd him: last a heathen  
 horde,  
 Reddening the sun with smoke and  
 earth with blood,  
 And on the spike that split the moth-  
 er's heart  
 Spitting the child, brake on him, till,  
 amazed,  
 He knew not whither he should turn  
 for aid.

But—for he heard of Arthur newly  
 crown'd,  
 Tho' not without an uproar made by  
 those  
 Who cried, "He is not Uther's son"—  
 the king  
 Sent to him, saying, "Arise, and help  
 us thou!  
 For here between the man and beast  
 we die."

And Arthur yet had done no deed of  
 arms,  
 But heard the call, and came: and  
 Guinevere  
 Stood by the castle walls to watch him  
 pass;  
 But since he neither wore on helm or  
 shield  
 The golden symbol of his kinglihood,

But rode a simple knight among his  
knights,  
And many of these in richer arms than  
he,  
She saw him not, or mark'd not, if she  
saw,  
One among many, tho' his face was  
bare.  
But Arthur, looking downward as he  
past,  
Felt the light of her eyes into his life  
Smite on the sudden, yet rode on, and  
pitch'd  
His tents beside the forest. And he  
drave  
The heathen, and he slew the beast,  
and fell'd  
The forest, and let in the sun, and  
made  
Broad pathways for the hunter and  
the knight;  
And so return'd.

For while he linger'd there,  
A doubt that ever smoulder'd in the  
hearts  
Of those great Lords and Barons of his  
realm  
Flash'd forth and into war: for most  
of these  
Made head against him, crying, "Who  
is he  
That he should rule us? who hath  
proven him,  
King Uther's son? for lo! we look at  
him  
And find nor face nor bearing, limbs  
nor voice,  
Are like to those of Uther whom we  
knew.  
This is the son of Gorlois, not the  
king;  
This is the son of Anton, not the king."

And Arthur, passing thence to battle,  
felt  
Travail, and throes and agonies of the  
life,  
Desiring to be join'd with Guinevere;  
And thinking as he rode, "Her father  
said  
That there between the men and beast  
they die.  
Shall I not lift her from this land of  
beasts  
Up to my throne, and side by side with  
me?  
What happiness to reign a lonely king,  
Vext—O ye stars that shudder over me,  
O earth that soundest hollow under  
me,  
Vext with waste dreams? for saving I  
be join'd  
To her that is the fairest under heaven,  
I seem as nothing in the mighty world,  
And cannot will my will, nor work my  
work  
Wholly, nor make myself in mine own  
realm  
Victor and lord. But were I join'd  
with her,

Then might we live together as one  
life,  
And reigning with one will in every  
thing  
Have power on this dark land to light  
en it,  
And power on this dead world to make  
it live."

And Arthur from the field of battle  
sent  
Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere,  
His new-made knights, to King Leo-  
dogran,  
Saying, "If I in aught have served  
thee well,  
Give me thy daughter Guinevere to  
wife."

"Whom when he heard, Leodogran in  
heart  
Debating—"How should I that am a  
king,  
However much he help me at my need,  
Give my one daughter saving to a king,  
And a king's son"—lifted his voice,  
and call'd  
A hoary man, his chamberlain, to  
whom  
He trusted all things, and of him re-  
quired  
His counsel: "Knowest thou aught  
of Arthur's birth?"

Then spake the hoary chamberlain  
and said,  
"Sir king, there be but two old men  
that know:  
And each is twice as old as I; and one  
is Merlin, the wise man that ever  
served  
King Uther thro' his magic art; and  
one  
is Merlin's master (so they call him)  
Bleys,  
Who taught him magic; but the  
scholar ran  
Before the master, and so far, that  
Bleys  
Laid magic by, and sat him down, and  
wrote  
All things and whatsoever Merlin did  
In one great annal-book, where after-  
years  
Will learn the secret of our Arthur's  
birth."

Te whom the King Leodogran re-  
plied,  
"O friend, had I been holpen half as  
well  
By this King Arthur as by thee to-day,  
Then beast and man had had their  
share of me:  
But summon here before us once more  
Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere."

Then, when they came before him,  
the king said,  
"I have seen the cuckoo chased by  
lesser fowl,

And reason in the chase : but where-  
fore now  
Do these your lords stir up the heat of  
war,  
Some calling Arthur born of Gorlois,  
Others of Anton? Tell me, ye your-  
selves,  
Hold ye this Arthur for King Uther's  
son?"

And Ulfus and Brastias answer'd,  
"Ay."

Then Bedivere, the first of all his  
knights  
Knighted by Arthur at his crowning,  
spake—  
For bold in heart and act and word  
was he,  
Whenever slander breathed against  
the king—

"Sir, there be many rumors on this  
head :

For there be those who hate him in  
their hearts,  
Call him baseborn, and since his ways  
are sweet,  
And theirs are bestial, hold him less  
than man :  
And there be those who deem him  
more than man,  
And dream he dropt from heaven : but  
my belief

In all this matter—so ye care to learn—  
Sir, for ye know that in King Uther's  
time

The prince and warrior Gorlois, he  
that held

Tintagil castle by the Cornish sea,  
Was wedded with a winsome wife,  
Ygerne :

And daughters had she borne him,—  
one whereof,  
Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Bel-  
licent,

Hath ever like a loyal sister cleaved  
To Arthur,—but a son she had not  
borne.

And Uther cast upon her eyes of love :  
But she, a stainless wife to Gorlois,  
So loathed the bright dishonor of his  
love,

That Gorlois and King Uther went to  
war :

And overthrown was Gorlois and slain.  
Then Uther in his wrath and heat be-  
sieged

Ygerne within Tintagil, where her  
men,

Seeing the mighty swarm about their  
walls,

Left her and fled, and Uther enter'd  
in,

And there was none to call to but him-  
self.

So, compass'd by the power of the  
king,

Enforc'd she was to wed him in her  
tears,

And with a shameful swiftness ; after-  
ward,

Not many moons, King Uther died him-  
self,

Moaning and wailing for an heir to rule  
After him, lest the realm should go to  
wrack.

And that same night, the night of the  
new year,

By reason of the bitterness and grief  
That vex'd his mother, all before his  
time

Was Arthur born, and all as soon as  
born

Deliver'd at a secret postern gate  
To Merlin, to be holden far apart  
Until his hour should come ; because  
the lords

Of that fierce day were as the lords of  
this,

Wild beasts, and surely would have  
torn the child

Piecemeal among them, had they  
known ; for each

But sought to rule for his own self and  
hand,

And many hated Uther for the sake  
Of Gorlois. Wherefore Merlin took the  
child,

And gave him to Sir Anton, an old  
knight

And ancient friend of Uther ; and his  
wife

Nursed the young prince, and rear'd  
him with her own ;

And no man knew. And ever since  
the lords

Have foughten like wild beasts among  
themselves,

So that the realm has gone to wrack :  
but now,

This year, when Merlin (for his hour  
had come)

Brought Arthur forth, and set him in  
the hall,

Proclaiming, ' Here is Uther's heir,  
your king.'

A hundred voices cried, ' Away with  
him!

No king of ours ! a son of Gorlois he,  
Or else the child of Anton, and no

king,  
Or else baseborn.' Yet Merlin thro'

his craft,

And while the people clamor'd for a  
king,

Had Arthur crown'd ; but after, the  
great lords

Banded, and so brake out in open  
war."

Then while the king debated with  
himself

If Arthur were the child of shameful-  
ness,

Or born the son of Gorlois, after death,  
Or Uther's son, and born before his

time,

Or whether there were truth in any-  
thing

Said by these three, there came to  
Cameliard,

With Gawain and young Modred, her  
two sons,  
Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Belli-  
cent;  
Whom as he could, not as he would, the  
king  
Made feast for, saying, as they sat at  
meat,

"A doubtful throne is ice on summer  
seas—  
Ye come from Arthur's court: think  
ye this king—  
So few his knights, however brave they  
be—  
Hath body enow to beat his foemen  
down?"

"O king," she cried, "and I will tell  
thee: few,  
Few, but all brave, all of one mind  
with him;  
For I was near him when the savage  
yells  
Of Uther's peerage died, and Arthur  
sat  
Crown'd on the daïs, and his warriors  
cried,  
'Be thou the king, and we will work  
thy will  
Who love thee.' Then the king in low  
deep tones,  
And simple words of great authority,  
Bound them by so strait vows to his  
own self,  
That when they rose, knighted from  
kneeling, some  
Were pale as at the passing of a ghost,  
Some flush'd, and others dazed, as one  
who wakes  
Half-blinded at the coming of a light.

"But when he spake and cheer'd his  
Table Round  
With large divine and comfortable  
words  
Beyond my tongue to tell thee—I be-  
held  
From eye to eye thro' all their Order  
flash  
A momentary likeness of the king:  
And ere it left their faces, thro' the  
cross  
And those around it and the Crucified,  
Down from the casement over Arthur,  
smote  
Flame-color, vert and azure, in three  
rays,  
One falling upon each of three fair  
queens,  
Who stood in silence near his throne,  
the friends  
Of Arthur, gazing on him, tall, with  
bright  
Sweet faces, who will help him at his  
need.

"And there I saw mage Merlin,  
whose vast wit

And hundred winters are but as the  
hands  
Of loyal vassals toiling for their liege.

"And near him stood the Lady of  
the Lake,  
Who knows a subtler magic than his  
own—  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-  
derful.  
She gave the king his huge cross-hilted  
sword,  
Whereby to drive the heathen out: a  
mist  
Of incense curl'd about her, and her  
face  
Wellnigh was hidden in the minster  
gloom;  
But there was heard among the holy  
hymns  
A voice as of the waters, for she dwells  
Down in a deep, calm, whatsoever  
storms  
May shake the world, and when the  
surface rolls,  
Hath power to walk the waters like  
our Lord.

"There likewise I beheld Excalibur  
Before him at his crowning borne, the  
sword  
That rose from out the bosom of the  
lake,  
And Arthur row'd across and took it—  
rich  
With jewels, elfin Urim, on the hilt,  
Bewildering heart and eye—the blade  
so bright.  
That men are blinded by it—on one  
side,  
Graven in the oldest tongue of all this  
world,  
'Take me,' but turn the blade and you  
shall see,  
And written in the speech ye speak  
yourself,  
'Cast me away!' And sad was Ar-  
thur's face  
Taking it, but old Merlin counsell'd  
him,  
'Take thou and strike! the time to  
cast away  
Is yet far off.' So this great brand the  
king  
Took, and by this will beat his foemen  
down."

Thereat Leodogran rejoiced, but  
thought  
To sift his doubtings to the last, and  
ask'd,  
Fixing full eyes of question on her  
face,  
"The swallow and the swift are near  
akin,  
But thou art closer to this noble prince,  
Being his own dear sister;" and she  
said,  
"Daughter of Gorlois and Ygerne am  
I;"

"And therefore Arthur's sister," ask'd  
the King.  
She answer'd, "These be secret things,"  
and sign'd  
To those two sons to pass and let them  
be.  
And Gawain went, and breaking into  
song  
Sprang out, and follow'd by his flying  
hair  
Ran like a colt, and leapt at all he saw:  
But Modred laid his ear beside the  
doors,  
And here half heard; the same that  
afterward  
Struck for the throne, and striking  
found his doom.

And then the Queen made answer,  
"What know I?  
For dark my mother was in eyes and  
hair,  
And dark in hair and eyes am I; and dark  
Was Gorlois, yea and dark was Uther  
too,  
Wellnigh to blackness; but this king  
is fair  
Beyond the race of Britons and of men.  
Moreover always in my mind I hear  
A cry from out the dawning of my life,  
A mother weeping and I hear her say,  
'O that ye had some brother, pretty  
one.  
To guard thee on the rough ways of the  
world.'"

"Ay," said the King, "and hear ye  
such a cry?  
But when did Arthur chance upon thee  
first?"

"O king!" she cried, "and I will  
tell thee true:  
He found me first when yet a little  
maid:  
Beaten I had been for a little fault  
Whereof I was not guilty; and out I  
ran  
And flung myself down on a bank of  
heath,  
And hated this fair world and all  
therein,  
And wept, and wish'd that I were dead;  
and be—  
I know not whether of himself he  
came,  
Or brought by Merlin, who, they say,  
can walk  
Unseen at pleasure—he was at my side,  
And spake sweet words, and comforted  
my heart,  
And dried my tears, being a child with  
me.  
And many a time he came, and ever-  
more  
As I grew greater grew with me; and  
sad  
At times he seem'd, and sad with him  
was I,

Stern too at times, and then I loved  
him not,  
But sweet again, and then I loved him  
well.  
And now of late I see him less and  
less,  
But those first days had golden hours  
for me,  
For then I surely thought he would be  
king.

"But let me tell thee now another  
tale:  
For Bleyes, our Merlin's master, as they  
say,  
Died but of late, and sent his cry to  
me,  
To hear him speak before he left his  
life.  
Shrunk like a fairy changeling lay the  
mage,  
And when I enter'd told me that him-  
self  
And Merlin ever served about the  
king,  
Uther, before he died, and on the  
night  
When Uther in Tintagil past away  
Moaning and wailing for an heir, the  
two  
Left the still king, and passing forth  
to breathe,  
Then from the castle gateway by the  
chasm  
Descending thro' the dismal night—a  
night  
In which the bounds of heaven and  
earth were lost—  
Beheld, so high upon the dreary  
deeps  
It seem'd in heaven, a ship, the shape  
thereof  
A dragon wing'd, and all from stem to  
stern  
Bright with a shining people on the  
decks,  
And gone as soon as seen. And then  
the two  
Dropt to the cove, and watch'd the  
great sea fall,  
Wave after wave, each mightier than  
the last,  
Till last, a ninth one, gathering half  
the deep  
And full of voices, slowly rose and  
plunged  
Roaring, and all the wave was in a  
flame:  
And down the wave and in the flame  
was borne  
A naked babe, and rode to Merlin's  
feet,  
Who stooped and caught the babe, and  
cried 'The King!  
Here is an heir for Uther!' And the  
fringe  
Of that great breaker, sweeping up the  
strand,  
Lash'd at the v'ward as he spake the  
word,

And all at once all round him rose in fire.  
 So that the child and he were clothed in fire.  
 And presently thereafter follow'd calm,  
 Free sky and stars: 'And this same child,' he said,  
 'Is he who reigns; nor could I part in peace  
 Till this were told.' And saying this the seer  
 Went thro' the strait and dreadful pass of death,  
 Not ever to be question'd any more  
 Save on the further side; but when I met  
 Merlin, and ask'd him if these things were truth—  
 The shining dragon and the naked child  
 Descending in the glory of the seas—  
 He laugh'd as is his wont, and answer'd me  
 In riddling triplets of old time, and said:

"Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow in the sky!  
 A young man will be wiser by and by;  
 An old man's wit may wander ere he die.  
 Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow on the sea!  
 And truth is this to me, and that to thee;  
 And truth or clothed or naked let it be.  
 Rain, sun, and rain! and the free blossom blows:  
 Sun, rain, and sun! and where is he who knows?  
 From the great deep to the great deep he goes.'

"So Merlin riddling anger'd me; but thou  
 Fear not to give this king thine only child,  
 Guinevere: so great bards of him will sing  
 Hereafter; and dark sayings from of old  
 Ranging and ringing thro' the minds of men,  
 And echo'd by old folk beside their fires  
 For comfort after their wage-work is done,  
 Speak of the king; and Merlin in our time  
 Hath spoken also, not in jest, and sworn  
 Tho' men may wound him that he will not die,  
 But pass, again to come; and then or now  
 Utterly smite the heathen underfoot,  
 Till these and all men hail him for their king."

She spake and King Leodogran rejoiced,  
 But musing "Shall I answer yea or nay?"  
 Doubted, and drowsed, nodded and slept, and saw,  
 Dreaming, a slope of land that ever grew,  
 Field after field, up to a height, the peak  
 Haze-hidden, and thereon a phantom king,  
 Now looming, and now lost; and on the slope  
 The sword rose, the hind fell, the herd was driven,  
 Fire glimpsed; and all the land from roof and rick,  
 In drifts of smoke before a rolling wind,  
 Stream'd to the peak, and mingled with the haze  
 And made it thicker; while the phantom king  
 Sent out at times a voice; and here or there  
 Stood one who pointed toward the voice, the rest  
 Slew on and burnt, crying, "No king of ours,  
 No son of Uther, and no king of ours;"  
 Till with a wink his dream was changed, the haze  
 Descended, and the solid earth became  
 As nothing, and the king stood out in heaven,  
 Crown'd. And Leodogran awoke, and sent  
 Ulfus, and Brastias, and Bedivere,  
 Back to the court of Arthur answering yea.

Then Arthur charged his warrior whom he loved  
 And honor'd most, Sir Lancelot, to ride forth  
 And bring the Queen;—and watch'd him from the gates:  
 And Lancelot past away among the flowers,  
 (For then was latter April) and re turn'd  
 Among the flowers, in May, with Guinevere.  
 To whom arrived, by Dubric the high saint,  
 Chief of the church in Britain, and before  
 The stateliest of her altar-shrines, the king  
 That morn was married, while in stainless white,  
 The fair beginners of a nobler time,  
 And glorying in their vows and him, his knights  
 Stood round him, and rejoicing in his joy.  
 And holy Dubric spread his hands and spake,

"Reign ye, and live and love, and  
make the world  
Other, and may thy Queen be one with  
thee,  
And all this Order of thy Table Round  
Fulfil the boundless purpose of their  
king."

Then at the marriage feast came in  
from Rome,  
The slowly-fading mistress of the  
world,  
Great lords, who claim'd the tribute as  
of yore.  
But Arthur spake, "Behold, for these  
have sworn  
To fight my wars, and worship me their  
king;  
The old order changeth, yielding place  
to new;  
And we that fight for our fair father  
Christ,  
Seeing that ye be grown too weak and  
old  
To drive the heathen from your Roman  
wall,  
No tribute will we pay:" so those  
great lords  
Drew back in wrath, and Arthur strove  
with Rome  
And Arthur and his knighthood for a  
space  
Were all one will, and thro' that  
strength the king  
Drew in the petty princedoms under  
him,  
Fought, and in twelve great battles  
overcame  
The heathen hordes, and made a realm  
and reign'd.

## GARETH AND LYNETTE.\*

WITH THIS POEM THE AUTHOR CON-  
CLUDES "THE IDYLS OF THE KING."

THE last tall son of Lot and Belli-  
cent,  
And tallest, Gareth, in a showerful  
spring  
Stared at the spate. Aslender-shafted  
Pine  
Lost footing, fell, and so was whirl'd  
away.  
"How he went down," said Gareth,  
"as a false knight  
Or evil king before my lance if lance  
Were mine to use—O senseless catar-  
act,  
Bearing all down in thy precipitancy—  
And yet thou art but swollen with cold  
snows,  
And mine is living blood: thou dost  
His will,

\*GARETH follows THE COMING OF  
ARTHUR, and THE LAST TOURNAMENT pre-  
cedes GUINEVERE.

The Maker's, and not knowest, and I  
that know,  
Have strength and wit, in my good  
mother's hail  
Linger with vacillating obedience,  
Prison'd, and kept and coax'd and  
whistled to—  
Since the good mother holds me still a  
child—  
Good mother is bad mother unto me!  
A worse were better; yet no worse  
would I.  
Heaven yield her for it, but in me put  
force  
To weary her ears with one continuous  
prayer,  
Until she let me fly disengaged to sweep  
In ever-highering eagle-circles up  
To the great Sun of Glory, and thence  
swoop  
Down upon all things base, and dash  
them dead,  
A knight of Arthur, working out his  
will,  
To cleanse the world. Why, Gawain,  
when he came  
With Modred hither in the summer-  
time,  
Ask'd me to tilt with him, the proven  
knight,  
Modred for want of worthier was the  
judge.  
Then I so shook him in the saddle, he  
said,  
'Thou hast half prevail'd against me,  
said so—he—  
Tho' Modred biting his thin lips was  
mute,  
For he is always sullen: what care  
I?"

And Gareth went, and hovering  
round her chair  
Ask'd, "Mother, tho' ye count me still  
the child,  
Sweet mother, do ye love the child?"  
She laugh'd,  
"Thou art but a wild-goose to question  
it."  
"Then, mother, and ye love the child,"  
he said,  
"Being a goose and rather tame than  
wild,  
Hear the child's story." "Yea, my  
well-beloved,  
An't were but of the goose and golden  
eggs."

And Gareth answer'd her with kind-  
ling eyes,  
"Nay, nay, good mother, but this egg  
of mine  
Was finer gold than any goose can lay;  
For this an Eagle, a royal Eagle, laid  
Almost beyond eye-reach, on such a  
palm  
As glitters gilded in thy Book of  
Hours.  
And there was ever haunting round the  
palm

A lusty youth, but poor, who often saw  
 The splendor sparkling from aloft, and  
 thought  
 'An I could climb and lay my hand  
 upon it,  
 Then were I wealthier than a leash of  
 kings.'  
 But ever when he reach'd a hand to  
 climb,  
 One, that had loved him from his child-  
 hood, caught  
 And stay'd him, 'Climb not lest thou  
 break thy neck,  
 I charge thee by my love,' and so the  
 boy,  
 Sweet mother, neither clomb, nor brake  
 his neck,  
 But brake his very heart in pining for  
 it,  
 And past away."

To whom the mother said,  
 "True love, sweet son, had risk'd him-  
 self and climb'd,  
 And handed down the golden treasure  
 to him."

And Gareth answer'd her with kind-  
 ling eyes,  
 "Gold? said I gold?—ay, then, why  
 he, or she,  
 Or whosoe'er it was, or half the world  
 Had ventured—*had* the thing I spake  
 of been  
 Mere gold—but this was all of that true  
 steel,  
 Whereof they forged the brand Excal-  
 ibur,  
 And lightnings played about it in the  
 storm,  
 And all the little fowl were flurried at  
 it,  
 And there were cries and clashings in  
 the nest,  
 That sent him from his senses: let me  
 go."

Then Bellicent bemoan'd herself and  
 said,  
 "Hast thou no pity upon my loneli-  
 ness?  
 Lo, where thy father Lot beside the  
 hearth  
 Lies like a log, and all but smoulder'd  
 out!  
 For ever since when traitor to the King  
 He fought against him in the Baron's  
 war,  
 And Arthur gave him back his terri-  
 tory,  
 His age hath slowly droopt, and now lies  
 there  
 A yet warm-corpse, and yet unburi-  
 able,  
 No more; nor sees, nor hears, nor  
 speaks, nor knows.  
 And both thy brethren are in Arthur's  
 hall,  
 Albeit neither loved with that full  
 love:  
 I feel for thee, nor worthy such a love:

Stay therefore thou; red berries charm  
 the bird,  
 And thee, mine innocent, the jousts,  
 the wars,  
 Who never knewest finger-ache, nor  
 pang  
 Of wrench'd or broken limb—an often  
 chance  
 In those brain-stunning shocks, and  
 tourney-falls,  
 Frights to my heart; but stay: follow  
 the deer  
 By these tall firs and our fast-falling  
 burns;  
 So make thy manhood mightier day by  
 day;  
 Sweet is the chase: and I will seek thee  
 out  
 Some comfortable bride and fair, to  
 grace  
 Thy climbing life, and cherish my  
 prone year,  
 Till falling into Lot's forgetfulness  
 I know not thee, myself, nor anything.  
 Stay, my best son! ye are yet more boy  
 than man."

Then Gareth, "An ye hold me yet for  
 child,  
 Hear yet once more the story of the  
 child.  
 For, mother, there was once a King,  
 like ours;  
 The prince his heir, when tall and mar-  
 riageable,  
 Ask'd for a bride; and thereupon the  
 King  
 Set two before him. One was fair,  
 strong, arm'd—  
 But to be won by force—and many men  
 Desired her; one, good lack, no man  
 desired,  
 And these were the conditions of the  
 King:  
 That save he won the first by force, he  
 needs  
 Must wed that other, whom no man de-  
 sired,  
 A red-faced bride who knew herself so  
 vile,  
 That evermore she long'd to hide her-  
 self,  
 Nor fronted man or woman, eye to eye—  
 Yea—some she cleaved to, but they  
 died of her.  
 And one—they call'd her Fame; and  
 one, O Mother,  
 How can you keep me tether'd to you—  
 Shame!  
 Man am I grown, a man's work must I  
 do,  
 Follow the deer? follow the Christ,  
 the King,  
 Live pure, speak true, right wrong,  
 follow the King—  
 Else, wherefore born?"

To whom the mother said,  
 "Sweet son, for there be many who  
 deem him not,"

Or will not deem him, wholly proven  
 King—  
 Albeit in mine own heart I knew him  
 King,  
 When I was frequent with him in my  
 youth,  
 And heard him Kingly speak, and  
 doubted him  
 No more than he, himself; but felt  
 him mine,  
 Of closest kin to me: yet—wilt thou  
 leave  
 Thine easeful biding here, and risk  
 thine all,  
 Life, limbs, for one that is not proven  
 King?  
 Stay, till the cloud that settles round  
 his birth  
 Hath lifted but a little. Stay, sweet  
 son."

And Gareth answer'd quickly, "Not  
 an hour,  
 So that ye yield me—I will walk thro'  
 fire,  
 Mother, to gain it—your full leave to  
 go.  
 Not proven, who swept the dust of  
 ruin'd Rome  
 From off the threshold of the realm,  
 and crush'd  
 The Idolaters, and made the people  
 free?  
 Who should be King save him who  
 makes us free?"

So when the Queen, who long had  
 sought in vain  
 To break him from the intent to which  
 he grew,  
 Found her son's will unwaveringly  
 one,  
 She answer'd craftily, "Will ye walk  
 thro' fire?  
 Who walks thro' fire will hardly heed  
 the smoke.  
 A go then, an ye must: only one  
 proof,  
 Before thou ask the King to make thee  
 knight,  
 Of thine obedience and thy love to me,  
 Thy mother,—I demand."

And Gareth cried,  
 "A hard one, or a hundred, so I go.  
 Nay—quick! the proof to prove me to  
 the quick!"

But slowly spake the mother, look-  
 ing at him,  
 "Prince, thou shalt go disguised to  
 Arthur's hall,  
 And hire thyself to serve for meats  
 and drinks  
 Among the scullions and the kitchen-  
 knaves,  
 And those that hand the dish across  
 the bar.  
 Nor shalt thou tell thy name to any  
 one.

And thou shalt serve a twelvemonth  
 and a day."

For so the Queen believed that when  
 her son  
 Beheld his only way to glory lead  
 Low down thro' villain kitchen-vassal-  
 age,  
 Her own true Gareth was too princely-  
 proud  
 To pass thereby; so should he rest  
 with her,  
 Closed in her castle from the sound of  
 arms.

Silent a while was Gareth, then  
 replied,  
 "The thrall in person may be free in  
 soul,  
 And I shall see the jousts. Thy son  
 am I,  
 And since thou art my mother, must  
 obey.  
 I therefore yield me freely to thy will;  
 For hence will I, disguised, and hire  
 myself  
 To serve with scullions and with kitch-  
 en-knaves;  
 Nor tell my name to any—no, not the  
 King."  
 Gareth awhile linger'd The mother's  
 eye,  
 Full of the wistful fear that he would  
 go,  
 And turning toward him wheresoe'er  
 he turn'd,  
 Perplex his outward purpose, till an  
 hour,  
 When waken'd by the wind which with  
 full voice  
 Swept bellowing thro' the darkness on  
 to dawn,  
 He rose, and out of slumber calling two  
 That still had tended on him from his  
 birth,  
 Before the wakeful mother heard him,  
 went.

The three were clad like tillers of the  
 soil.  
 Southward they set their faces. The  
 birds made  
 Melody on branch, and melody in mid-  
 air.  
 The damp hill-slopes were quicken'd  
 into green,  
 And the live green had kindled into  
 flowers,  
 For it was past the time of Easterday.

So, when their feet were planted on  
 the plain  
 That broaden'd toward the base of  
 Camelot,  
 Far off they saw the silver misty morn  
 Rolling her smoke about the Royal  
 mount,  
 That rose between the forest and the  
 field.  
 At times the summit of the high city  
 flash'd;

At times the spires and turrets half-way down  
 Prick'd thro' the mist ; at times the great gate shone  
 Only, that open'd on the field below :  
 Anon, the whole fair city had disappear'd.

Then those who went with Gareth were amazed,  
 One crying, " Let us go no farther, lord.  
 Here is a city of Enchanters, built  
 By fairy Kings." The second echo'd him,  
 " Lord, we have heard from our wise men at home  
 To Northward, that this King is not the King,  
 But only changeling out of Fairyland,  
 Who drave the heathen hence by sorcery  
 And Merlin's glamour." Then the first again,  
 " Lord, there is no such city anywhere,  
 But all a vision."

Gareth answer'd them  
 With laughter, swearing he had glamour enow  
 In his own blood, his principedom, youth  
 and hopes,  
 To plunge old Merlin in the Arabian sea ;  
 So push'd them all unwilling toward the gate.  
 And there was no gate like it under heaven ;  
 For barefoot on the keystone, which was lined  
 And rippled like an ever-fleeting wave,  
 The Lady of the Lake stood : all her dress  
 Wept from her sides as water flowing away ;  
 But like the cross her great and goodly arms  
 Stretch'd under all the cornice and upheld :  
 And drops of water fell from either hand ;  
 And down from one a sword was hung,  
 A censer, either worn with wind and storm ;  
 And o'er her breast floated the sacred fish ;  
 And in the space to left of her, and right,  
 Were Arthur's wars in weird devices done,  
 New things and old co-twisted, as if Time  
 Were nothing, so inveterately, that men  
 Were giddy gazing there ; and over all  
 High on the top were those three Queens, the friends  
 Of Arthur, who should help him at his need.

Then those with Gareth for so long a space  
 Stared at the figures, that at last it seem'd  
 The dragon-boughts and elvish emblems  
 Began to move, seethe, twine and curl :  
 they call'd  
 To Gareth, " Lord, the gateway is alive."

And Gareth likewise on them fixt his eyes  
 So long, that ev'n to him they seem'd to move.  
 Out of the city a blast of music peal'd.  
 Back from the gate started the three, to whom  
 From out thereunder came an ancient man.  
 Long-bearded, saying, " Who be ye, my sons ? "

Then Gareth, " We be tillers of the soil,  
 Who leaving share in furrow come to see  
 The glories of our King : but these, my men,  
 (Your city moved so weirdly in the mist,)  
 Doubt if the King be King at all, or come  
 From fairyland ; and whether this be built  
 By magic, and by fairy Kings and Queens ;  
 Or whether there be any city at all,  
 Or all a vision : and this music now  
 Hath scared them both, but tell thou these the truth."

Then that old Seer made answer playing on him  
 And saying, " Sou, I have seen the good ship sail  
 Keel upward and mast downward in the heavens,  
 And solid turrets topsy-turvy in air :  
 And here is truth ; but an it please thee not,  
 Take thou the truth as thou hast told it me.  
 For truly, as thou sayest, a Fairy King  
 And Fairy Queens have built the city, son ;  
 They came from out a sacred mountain cleft  
 Toward the sunrise, each with harp in hand,  
 And built it to the music of their harps.  
 And as thou sayest it is enchanted, son,  
 For there is nothing in it as it seems  
 Saving the King ; tho' some there be that hold  
 The King a shadow, and the city real :  
 Yet take thou heed of him, for, so thou pass  
 Beneath this archway, then wilt thou become

A thrall to his enchantments, for the  
King  
Will bind thee by such vows, as is a  
shame  
A man should not be bound by, yet the  
which  
No man can keep ; but, so thou dread  
to swear,  
Pass not beneath this gateway, but  
abide  
Without, among the cattle of the field.  
For, an ye heard a music, like enow  
They are building still, seeing the city  
is built  
To music, therefore never built at all,  
And therefore built forever."

Gareth spake  
Anger'd, " Old Master, reverence thine  
own beard  
That looks as white as utter truth, and  
seems  
Wellnigh as long as thou art statured  
tall !  
Why mockest thou the stranger that  
hath been  
To thee fair-spoken ? "

But the Seer replied,  
" Know ye not then the Riddling of  
the Bards ?  
' Confusion, and illusion, and relation,  
Elusion, and occasion, and evasion ? ' "  
I mock thee not but as thou mockest  
me,  
And all that see thee, for thou art not  
who  
Thou seemest, but I know thee who  
thou art.  
And now thou goest up to mock the  
King,  
Who cannot brook the shadow of any  
lie."

Unmockingly the mocker ending  
here  
Turn'd to the right, and past along the  
plain ;  
Whom Gareth looking after said, " My  
men,  
Our one white lie sits like a little ghost  
Here on the threshold of our enterprise.  
Let love be blamed for it, not she, nor  
I :  
Well, we will make amends."

With all good cheer  
He spake and laugh'd, then enter'd  
with his twain  
Camelot, a city of shadowy palaces,  
And stately, rich in emblem and the  
work  
Of ancient kings who did their days in  
stone ;  
Which Merlin's hand, the Mage at Ar-  
thur's court,  
Knowing all arts, had touch'd, and  
everywhere  
At Arthur's ordinance, tipt with lessen-  
ing peak

And pinnacle, and had made it spire  
to heaven.  
And ever and anon a knight would  
pass  
Outward, or inward to the hall : his  
arms  
Clash'd ; and the sound was good to  
Gareth's ear.  
And out of bower and casement shyly  
glanced  
Eyes of pure women, wholesome stars  
of love ;  
And all about a healthful people stept  
As in the presence of a gracious king.

Then into hall Gareth ascending  
heard  
A voice, the voice of Arthur, and  
beheld  
Far over heads in that long-vaulted  
hall  
The splendor of the presence of the  
King  
Throned, and delivering doom — and  
look'd no more—  
But felt his young heart hammering  
in his ears,  
And thought, " For this half-shadow  
of a lie  
The truthful King will doom me when  
I speak."  
Yet pressing on, tho' all in fear to find  
Sir Gawain or Sir Modred, saw nor one  
Nor other, but in all the listening eyes  
Of those tall knights, that ranged  
about the throne,  
Clear honor shining like the dewy star  
Of dawn, and faith in their great King,  
with pure  
Affection, and the light of victory,  
And glory gain'd, and evermore to gain.

Then came a widow crying to the  
King,  
" A boon, Sir King ! Thy father,  
Uther, reft  
From my dead lord a field with vio-  
lence :  
For howsoe'er at first he proffer'd gold,  
Yet, for the field was pleasant in our  
eyes,  
We yielded not ; and then he reft us  
of it  
Perforce, and left us neither gold nor  
field."

Said Arthur, " Whether would ye ?  
gold or field ? "  
To whom the woman weeping, " Nay,  
my lord,  
The field was pleasant in my husband's  
eye."

And Arthur, " Have thy pleasant  
field again,  
And thrice the gold for Uther's use  
thereof,  
According to the years. No boon is  
here,  
But justice, so thy say be proven true.

Accursed, who from the wrongs his  
father did  
Would shape himself a right ! ”

And while she past,  
Came yet another widow crying to him  
“ A boon, Sir King ! Thine enemy,  
King, am I.

With thine own hand thou slewest my  
dear lord,  
A knight of Uther, in the Barons' war,  
When Lot and many another rose and  
fought

Against thee, saying thou wert basely  
born.

I held with these, and loathe to ask  
thee aught.

Yet lo ! my husband's brother had my  
son

Thrall'd in his castle, and hath starved  
him dead ;

And standeth seized of that inheritance  
Which thou that slewest the sire hast  
left the son.

So tho' I scarce can ask it thee for hate,  
Grant me some knight to do the battle  
for me,

Kill the foul thief, and wreak me for  
my son.”

Then strode a good knight forward,  
crying to him,

“ A boon, Sir King ! I am her kins-  
man, I.

Give me to right her wrong, and slay  
the man.”

Then came Sir Kay, the seneschal,  
and cried,

“ A boon, Sir King ! ev'n that thou  
grant her none,

This railer, that hath mock'd thee in  
full hall—

None ; or the wholesome boon of gyve  
and gag.”

But Arthur, “ We sit, King, to help  
the wrong'd

Thro' all our realm. The woman loves  
her lord.

Peace to thee, woman, with thy loves  
and hates !

The kings of old had doom'd thee to  
the flames,

Aurelius Emrys would have scourged  
thee dead,

And Uther slit thy tongue : but get  
thee hence—

Lest that rough humor of the kings of  
old

Return upon me ! Thou that art her  
kin,

Go likewise ; lay him low and slay him  
not,

But bring him here, that I may judge  
the right,

According to the justice of the King :  
Then, be he guilty, by that deathless

King  
Who lived and died for men the man  
shall die.”

Then came in hall the messenger of  
Mark,

A name of evil savor in the land,

The Cornish king. In either hand he  
bore

What dazzled all, and shone far-off as  
shines

A field of charlock in the sudden sun  
Between twoshowers, a cloth of palest

gold,  
Which down he laid before the throne,

and knelt,  
Delivering, that his Lord, the vassal

king,  
Was ev'n upon his way to Cameiot ;

For having heard that Arthur of his  
grace

Had made his goodly cousin, Tristram,  
knight,

And, for himself was of the greater  
state,

Being a king, he trusted his liege-lord  
Would yield him this large honor all

the more  
So pray'd him well to accept this cloth

of gold,  
In token of true heart and fealty.

Then Arthur cried to rend the cloth,  
to rend

In pieces, and so cast it on the hearth  
An oak-tree smoulder'd there. “ The

goodly knight !  
What ! shall the shield of Mark stand

among these ? ”

For, midway down the side of that  
long hall

A stately pile,—whereof along the  
front,

Some blazon'd, some but carven, and  
some blank,

There ran a treble range of stony  
shields,—

Rose, and high-arching overbrow'd the  
hearth.

And under every shield a knight was  
named :

For this was Arthur's custom in his  
hall ;

When some good knight had done one  
noble deed,

His arms were carven only ; but if  
twain

His arms were blazon'd also ; but if  
none

The shield was blank and bare without  
a sign

Saving the name beneath ; and Gareth  
saw

The shield of Gawain blazon'd rich  
and bright,

And Modred's blank as death ; and  
Arthur cried

To rend the cloth and cast it on the  
hearth.

“ More like are we to reave him of  
his crown

Than make him knight because men  
call him king.”

The kings we found, ye know we stay'd  
 their hands  
 From war among themselves, but left  
 them kings;  
 Of whom were any bounteous, merci-  
 ful,  
 Truth-speaking, brave, good livers,  
 them we enroll'd  
 Among us, and they sit within our  
 hall,  
 But Mark hath tarnish'd the great  
 name of king,  
 As Mark would sully the low state of  
 churl:  
 And, seeing he hath sent us cloth of  
 gold,  
 Return, and meet, and hold him from  
 our eyes,  
 Lest we should lap him up in cloth of  
 lead,  
 Silenced forever—craven—a man of  
 plots  
 Craft, poisonous counsels, wayside am-  
 bushings—  
 No fault of thine: let Kay, the senes-  
 chal,  
 Look to thy wants, and send thee satis-  
 fied—  
 Accursed, who strikes nor lets the  
 hand be seen!"

And many another suppliant crying  
 came  
 With noise of ravage wrought by beast  
 and man,  
 And evermore a knight would ride  
 away.

Last Gareth leaning both hands  
 heavily  
 Down on the shoulders of the twain,  
 his men,  
 Approach'd between them toward the  
 King, and ask'd,  
 "A boon, Sir King (his voice was all  
 ashamed),  
 "For see ye not how weak and hun-  
 ger worn  
 I seem—leaning on these? grant me  
 to serve  
 For meat and drink among thy kitchen-  
 knaves  
 A twelvemonth and a day, nor seek  
 my name.  
 Hereafter I will fight."

To him the King,  
 "A goodly youth and worth a goodlier  
 boon!  
 But an thou wilt no goodlier, then  
 must Kay,  
 The master of the meats and drinks,  
 be thine."

He rose and past; then Kay, a man  
 of mien  
 Wan-sallow as the plant that feels it-  
 self  
 Root-bitten by white lichen,

"Lo ye now!  
 This fellow hath broken from some  
 Abbey, where,

God wot, he had not beef and brewis  
 enow,  
 However that might chance! but an  
 he work,  
 Like any pigeon will I cram his crop,  
 And sleeker shall he shine than any  
 hog."

Then Lancelot standing near, "Sir  
 Seneschal,  
 Sleuth-bound thou knowest, and gray,  
 and all the bounds;  
 A horse thou knowest, a man thou  
 dost not know:  
 Broad brows and fair, a fluent hair  
 and fine,  
 High nose, a nostril large and fine,  
 and hands  
 Large, fair and fine!—Some young  
 lad's mystery—  
 But, or from sheepcot or king's hall,  
 the boy  
 Is noble-natured. Treat him with all  
 grace,  
 Lest he should come to shame thy  
 judging of him."

Then Kay, "What murmurest thou  
 of mystery?  
 Think ye this fellow will poison the  
 King's dish?  
 Nay, for he spake too fool-like: mys-  
 tery!  
 Tut, an the lad were noble, he had  
 ask'd  
 For horse and armor: fair and fine,  
 forsooth!  
 Sir Fine-face, Sir Fair-hands? but see  
 thou to it  
 That thine own fineness, Lancelot,  
 some fine day  
 Undo thee not—and leave my man to  
 me."

So Gareth all for glory underwent  
 The sooty yoke of kitchen vassalage;  
 Ate with young lads his portion by the  
 door,  
 And couch'd at night with grimy  
 kitchen-knaves.  
 And Lancelot ever spake him pleas-  
 antly,  
 But Kay the seneschal who loved him  
 not  
 Would hustle and harry him, and  
 labor him  
 Beyond his comrade of the hearth, and  
 set  
 To turn the broach, draw water, or  
 hew wood,  
 Or grosser tasks; and Gareth bow'd  
 himself  
 With all obedience to the King, and  
 wrought  
 All kind of service with a noble ease  
 That graced the lowliest act in doing  
 it.  
 And when the thralls had talk among  
 themselves,  
 And one would praise the love that  
 linkt the King

And Lancelot—how the King had saved  
 his life  
 In battle twice, and Lancelot once the  
 King's—  
 For Lancelot was the first in Tourna-  
 ment,  
 But Arthur mightiest on the battle-  
 field—  
 Gareth was glad. Or if some other  
 told,  
 How once the wandering forester at  
 dawn,  
 Far over the blue tarns and hazy seas,  
 On Caer-Eryri's highest found the  
 King,  
 A naked babe, of whom the Prophet  
 spake,  
 "He passes to the Isle Avilion,  
 He passes and is heal'd and cannot  
 die"—  
 Gareth was glad. But if their talk  
 were foul,  
 Then would he whistle rapid as any  
 lark,  
 Or carol some old roundelay, and so  
 loud  
 That first they mock'd, but after, rev-  
 erenced him.  
 Or Gareth telling some prodigious tale  
 Of knights, who sliced a red life-bub-  
 bling way  
 Thro' twenty folds of twisted dragon,  
 held  
 All in a gap-mouth'd circle his good  
 mates  
 Lying or sitting round him, idle hands,  
 Charm'd; till Sir Kay, the seneschal,  
 would come  
 Blustering upon them, like a sudden  
 wind  
 Among dead leaves, and drive them  
 all apart.  
 Or when the thralls had sport among  
 themselves,  
 So there were any trial of mastery,  
 He, by two yards in casting bar or  
 stone,  
 Was counted best; and if there chanced  
 a joust,  
 So that Sir Kay nodded him leave to go,  
 Would hurry thither, and when he  
 saw the knights  
 Clash like the coming and retiring  
 wave,  
 And the spear spring, and good horse  
 reel, the boy  
 Was half beyond himself for ecstasy.

So for a month he wrought among  
 the thralls;  
 But in the weeks that follow'd, the  
 good Queen,  
 Repentant of the word she made him  
 swear,  
 And saddening in her childless castle,  
 sent,  
 Between the increscent and decrecent  
 moon.  
 Arms for her son, and loosed him from  
 his vow.

This, Gareth hearing from a squire  
 of Lot  
 With whom he used to play at tourney  
 once,  
 When both were children, and in  
 lonely haunts  
 Would scratch a ragged oval on the  
 sand,  
 And each at either dash from either  
 end—  
 Shame never made girl redder than  
 Gareth joy.  
 He laugh'd; he sprang. "Out of the  
 smoke, at once  
 I leap from Satan's foot to Peter's  
 knee—  
 These news be mine, none other's—  
 nay, the King's—  
 Descend into the city:" whereon he  
 sought  
 The King alone, and found, and told  
 him all.

"I have stagger'd thy strong Gawain  
 in a tilt  
 For pastime; yea, he said it: joust  
 can I.  
 Make me thy knight—in secret! let  
 my name  
 Be hidd'n, and give me the first quest,  
 I spring  
 Like flame from ashes."

Here the King's calm eye  
 Fell on, and check'd, and made him  
 flush, and bow  
 Lowly, to kiss his hand, who answer'd  
 him,  
 "Son, the good mother let me know  
 thee here,  
 And sent her wish that I would yield  
 thee thine.  
 Make thee my knight? my knights are  
 sworn to vows  
 Of utter hardihood, utter gentleness,  
 And, loving, utter faithfulness in love,  
 And uttermost obedience to the King."

Then Gareth, lightly springing from  
 his knees,  
 "My King, for hardihood I can promise  
 thee.  
 For uttermost obedience make de-  
 mand  
 Of whom ye gave me to, the Seneschal,  
 No mellow master of the meats and  
 drinks!  
 And as for love, God wot, I love not  
 yet,  
 But love I shall, God willing."

And the King—  
 "Make thee my knight in secret? yea,  
 but he,  
 Our noblest brother, and our truest  
 man,  
 And one with me in all, he needs must  
 know."

"Let Lancelot know, my King, let  
 Lancelot know,  
 Thy noblest and thy truest."

And the King—  
 "But wherefore would ye men should wonder at you!  
 Nay, rather for the sake of me, their King,  
 And the deed's sake my knighthood do the deed,  
 Than to be noised of."

Merrily Gareth ask'd,  
 "Have I not earn'd my cake in baking of it?  
 Let be my name until I make my name!  
 My deeds will speak: it is but for a day."  
 So with a kindly hand on Gareth's arm  
 Smiled the great King, and half-unwillingly  
 Loving his lusty youthhood yielded to him.  
 Then, after summoning Lancelot privily,  
 "I have given him the first quest: he is not proven.  
 Look therefore when he calls for this in hall,  
 Thou get to horse and follow him far away.  
 Cover the lions on thy shield, and see  
 Far as thou mayest, he be nor ta'en nor slain."

Then that same day there past into the hall  
 A damsel of high lineage, and a brow May-blossom, and a cheek of apple-blossom,  
 Hawk-eyes; and lightly was her slender nose  
 Tip-tilted like the petal of a flower;  
 She into hall past with her page and cried,  
 "O King, for thou hast driven the foe without,  
 See to the foe within! bridge, ford, beset  
 By bandits, every one that owns a tower  
 The Lord for half a league. Why sit ye there?  
 Rest would I not, Sir King, an I were king,  
 Till ev'n the lonest hold were all as free  
 From cursed bloodshed, as thine altar-cloth  
 From that blest blood it is a sin to spill."

"Comfort thyself," said Arthur, "I nor mine  
 Rest: so my knighthood keep the vows they swore,  
 The wastest moorland of our realm shall be  
 Safe, damsel, as the centre of this hall.  
 What is thy name? thy need?"

"My name?" she said—  
 "Lynette my name; noble; my need, a knight  
 To combat for my sister, Lyonors,  
 A lady of high lineage, of great lands,  
 And comely, yea, and comelier than myself.  
 She lives in Castle Perilous: a river  
 Runs in three loops about her living-place;  
 And o'er it are three passings, and three knights  
 Defend the passings, brethren, and a fourth  
 And of that four the mightiest, holds her stay'd  
 In her own castle and so besieges her  
 To break her will, and make her wed with him:  
 And but delays his purport till thou send  
 To do the battle with him, thy chief man  
 Sir Lancelot whom he trusts to overthrow,  
 Then wed, with glory; but she will not wed  
 Save whom she loveth, or a holy life.  
 Now therefore have I come for Lancelot."

Then Arthur mindful of Sir Gareth ask'd,  
 "Damsel, ye know this Order lives to crush  
 All wrongers of the Realm. But say, these four,  
 Who be they? What the fashion of the men?"

"They be of foolish fashion, O Sir King,  
 The fashion of that old knight-errantry  
 Who ride abroad and do but what they will;  
 Courteous or bestial from the moment,  
 Such as have nor law nor king; and three of these  
 Proud in their fantasy call themselves the Day,  
 Morning-Star, and Noon-Sun, and Evening-Star,  
 Being strong fools; and never a whit more wise  
 The fourth, who alway rideth arm'd in black,  
 A huge man-beast of boundless savagery.  
 He names himself the Night and cf-tener Death.  
 And wears a helmet mounted with a skull  
 And bears a skeleton figured on his arms,  
 To show that who may slay or scape the three  
 Slain by himself shall enter endless night.  
 And all these four be fools, but mighty men,

And therefore am I come for Lance-  
lot."

Hereat Sir Gareth call'd from where  
he rose,  
A head with kindling eyes above the  
throng,  
"A boon, Sir King—this quest!" then  
—for he mark'd  
Kay near him groaning like a wounded  
bull—  
"Yea, King, thou knowest thy kitchen-  
knave am I,  
And mighty thro' thy meats and  
drinks am I,  
And I can topple over a hundred such.  
Thy promise, King," and Arthur glanc-  
ing at him,  
Brought down a momentary brow,  
"Rough, sudden,  
And pardonable, worthy to be knight—  
Go therefore," and all hearers were  
amazed.

But on the damsel's forehead shame,  
pride, wrath,  
Slew the May-white: she lifted either  
arm,  
"Fie on thee, King! I ask'd for thy  
chief knight,  
And thou hast given me but a kitchen-  
knave."  
Then ere a man in hall could stay her,  
turn'd,  
Fled down the lane of access to the  
King,  
Took horse, descended the slope street,  
and past  
The weird white gate, and paused with-  
out, beside  
The field of tourney, murmuring  
"kitchen-knave."

Now two great entries open'd from  
the hall,  
At one end one, that gave upon a range  
Of level pavement where the King  
would pace  
Atsunrise, gazing over plain and wood.  
And down from this a lordly stairway  
sloped  
Till lost in blowing trees and tops of  
towers.  
And out by this main doorway past the  
King.  
But one was counter to the hearth, and  
rose  
High that the highest-crested helm  
could ride  
Therethro' nor graze: and by this en-  
try fled  
The damsel in her wrath, and on to  
this  
Sir Gareth strode, and saw without the  
door  
King Arthur's gift, the worth of half a  
town,  
A warhorse of the best, and near it stood  
The two that out of north had follow'd  
him:

This bare a maiden shield, a casque,  
that held  
The horse, the spear; whereat Sir Ga-  
reth loosed  
A cloak that dropt from collar-bone to  
heel,  
A cloth of roughest web, and cast it  
down,  
And from it like a fuel-smother'd fire,  
That lookt half-dead, brake bright,  
and flash'd as those  
Dull-coated things, that making slide  
apart  
Their dusk-wing cases, all beneath  
there burn  
A jewel'd harness, ere they pass and  
fly.  
So Gareth ere he parted flash'd in  
arms.  
Then while he donn'd the helm, and  
took the shield  
And mounted horse and graspt a spear,  
of grain  
Storm-strengthen'd on a windy site,  
and tipt  
With trenchant steel, around him  
slowly prest  
The people, and from out of kitchen  
came  
The thralls in throng, and seeing who  
had work'd  
Lustier than any, and whom they could  
but love,  
Mounted in arms, threw up their caps  
and cried,  
"God bless the King, and all his fel-  
lowship!"  
And on thro' lanes of shouting Gareth  
rode  
Down the slope street, and past with-  
out the gate.

So Gareth past with joy; but as the  
cur  
Pluckt from the cur he fights with, ere  
his cause  
Be cool'd by fighting, follows, being  
named,  
His owner, but remembers all, and  
growls  
Remembering, so Sir Kay beside the  
door  
Mutter'd in scorn of Gareth whom he  
used  
To harry and hustle.

"Bound upon a quest  
With horse and arms—the King hath  
past his time—  
My scullion knave Thralls to your  
work again,  
For an your fire be low ye kindle mine!  
Will there dawn in West and eve in  
East?  
Begone! — my knave! — belike and  
like enow  
Some old head-blow not heeded in his  
youth  
So shook his wits they wander in his  
prime —

Crazed! How the villain lifted up his voice,  
 Nor shamed to bawl himself a kitchen-knave,  
 Tut: he was tame and meek enow with me,  
 Till peacock'd up with Lancelot's noticing.  
 Well—I will after my loud knave, and learn  
 Whether he know me for his master yet.  
 Out of the smoke he came, and so my lance  
 Hold, by God's grace, he shall into the mire—  
 Thence, if the King awaken from his craze,  
 Into the smoke again."

But Lancelot said,  
 "Kay, wherefore will ye go against the King,  
 For that did never he whereon ye rail,  
 But ever meekly served the King in thee?  
 Abide: take counsel; for this lad is great  
 And lusty, and knowing both of lance and sword."  
 "Tut, tell not me," said Kay, "ye are overfine  
 To mar stout knaves with foolish courtesies."  
 Then mounted, on thro' silent faces rode  
 Down the slope city, and out beyond the gate.

But by the field of tourney lingering yet  
 Mutter'd the damsel, "Wherefore did the King  
 Scorn me? for, were Sir Lancelot lackt, at least  
 He might have yielded to me one of those  
 Who tilt for lady's love and glory here,  
 Rather than—O sweet heaven? O fie upon him—  
 His kitchen-knave."

To whom Sir Gareth drew  
 (And there were none but few goodlier than he)  
 Shining in arms, "Damsel, the quest is mine.  
 Lead, and I follow." She thereat, as one  
 That smells a foul-flesh'd agaric in the holt,  
 And deems it carrion of some woodland thing,  
 Or shrew, or weasel, nipt her slender nose  
 With petulant thumb and finger shrilling, "Hence!  
 Avoid, thou smell'st all of kitchen-grease.  
 And look who comes behind," for there was Kay.

"Knowest thou not me? thy master?  
 I am Kay.  
 We lack thee by the hearth."

And Gareth to him,  
 "Master no more! too well I know thee, ay—  
 The most ungentle knight in Arthur's hall."  
 "Have at thee then," said Kay: they shock'd, and Kay  
 Fell shoulder-slipt, and Gareth cried again,  
 "Lead, and I follow," and fast away she fled.

But after sod and shingle ceased to fly  
 Behind her, and the heart of her good horse  
 Was nigh to burst with violence of the beat,  
 Perforce she stay'd, and overtaken spoke.

"What doest thou, scullion, in my fellowship?  
 Deem'st thou that I accept thee aught the more  
 Or love thee better, that by some device  
 Full cowardly, or by mere unhappiness,  
 Thou hast overthrown and slain thy master—thou!—  
 Dish-washer and broach-turner, loon!  
 —tell me  
 Thou smell'st all of kitchen as before."

"Damsel," Sir Gareth answer'd gently, "say  
 Whate'er ye will, but whatsoever ye say,  
 I leave not till I finish this fair quest,  
 Or die therefor."

"Ay, wilt thou finish it?  
 Sweet lord, how like a noble knight he talks!  
 The listening rogue hath caught the manner of it.  
 But, knave, anon thou shalt be met with, knave,  
 And then by such a one that thou for all  
 The kitchen brewis that was ever sapt  
 Shall not once dare to look him in the face."

"I shall assay," said Gareth with a smile  
 That madden'd her, and away she flash'd again  
 Down the long avenues of a boundless wood,  
 And Gareth following was again beknaved.

"Sir Kitchen-knave, I have miss'd the only way  
 Where Arthur's men are set along the wood;

The wood is nigh as full of thieves as leaves;  
 If both be slain, I am rid of thee; but yet,  
 Sir Scullion, canst thou use that spit of thine?  
 Fight, an thou canst: I have miss'd the only way."

So till the dusk that follow'd even-song  
 Rode on the two, reviler and reviled:  
 Then after one long slope was mounted, saw,  
 Bowl-shaped, thro' tops of many thousand pines  
 A gloomy-gladed hollow slowly sink  
 To westward—in the deeps whereof a mere,  
 Round as the red eye of an Eagle-owl,  
 Under the half-dead sunset glared; and cries  
 Ascended, and there brake a serving-man  
 Flying from out of the black wood, and crying,  
 "They have bound my lord to cast him in the mere."  
 Then Gareth, "Bound am I to right the wrong'd,  
 But straitlier bound am I to bide with thee."  
 And when the damsel spake contemptuously,  
 "Lead and I follow," Gareth cried again,  
 "Follow, I lead!" so down among the pines  
 He plunged; and there, blackshadow'd nigh the mere,  
 And mid-thigh-deep in bulrushes and reed,  
 Saw six tall men haling a seventh along,  
 A stone about his neck, to drown him in it.  
 Three with good blows he quieted, but three  
 Fled thro' the pines; and Gareth loosed the stone  
 From off his neck, then in the mere beside  
 Tumbled it; oilily bubbled up the mere.  
 Last, Gareth loosed his bonds and on free feet  
 Set him, a stalwart Baron, Arthur's friend.

"Well that ye came, or else these catiff rogues  
 Had wreak'd themselves on me; good cause is theirs  
 To hate me, for my wont hath ever been  
 To catch my thief, and then like vermin here  
 Drown him, and with a stone about his neck;  
 And under this wan water many of them

Lie rotting, but at night let go the stone,  
 And rise, and flickering in a grimly light  
 Dance on the mere. Good now, ye have saved a life  
 Worth somewhat as the cleanser of this wood.  
 And fain would I reward thee worshipfully.  
 What guerdon will ye?"

Gareth sharply spake,  
 "None! for the deed's sake have I done the deed,  
 In uttermost obedience to the King.  
 But will ye yield this damsel harbor-age?"

Whereat the Baron saying, "I well believe  
 Ye be of Arthur's Table," a light laugh  
 Broke from Lynette, "Ay, truly of a truth,  
 And in a sort, being Arthur's kitchen-knave!—  
 But deem not I accept thee aught the more,  
 Scullion, for running sharply with thy spit  
 Down on a rout of craven foresters.  
 A thresher with his flail had scatter'd them.  
 Nay—for thou smell'st of the kitchen still.  
 But an this lord will yield us harbor-age,  
 Well."

So she spake. A league beyond the wood,  
 All in a full-fair manor and a rich,  
 His towers where that day a feast had been  
 Held in high hall, and many a viand left,  
 And many a costly cate, received the three.  
 And there they placed a peacock in his pride  
 Before the damsel, and the Baron set  
 Gareth beside her, but at once she rose.

"Meseems, that here is much discourtesy,  
 Setting this knave, Lord Baron, at my side.  
 Hear me—this morn I stood in Arthur's hall,  
 And pray'd the King would grant me Lancelot  
 To fight the brotherhood of Day and Night—  
 The last a monster unsubduable  
 Of any save of him for whom I call'd—  
 Suddenly bawls this frontless kitchen-knave,  
 'The quest is mine; thy kitchen-knave am I,  
 And mighty thro' thy meats and drinks am I.'

Then Arthur all at once gone mad replies,  
 'Go therefore,' and so gives the quest  
 to him —  
 Him—here—a villain fitter to stick  
 swine  
 Than ride abroad redressing women's  
 wrong,  
 Or sit beside a noble gentlewoman."

Then half-ashamed and part-amazed,  
 the lord  
 Now look'd at one and now at other,  
 left  
 The damsel by the peacock in his pride,  
 And, seating Gareth at another board,  
 Sat down beside him, ate and then began.

"Friend, whether ye be kitchen-  
 knave, or not,  
 Or whether it be the maiden's fantasy,  
 And whether she be mad, or else the  
 King,  
 Or both or neither, or thyself be mad,  
 I ask not: but thou strikest a strong  
 stroke,  
 For strong thou art and goodly therewithal,  
 And savor of my life; and therefore  
 now,  
 For here be mighty men to joust with,  
 weigh,  
 Whether thou wilt not with thy damsel  
 back  
 To crave again Sir Lancelot of the  
 King.  
 Thy pardon; I but speak for thine  
 avail,  
 The savor of my life."

And Gareth said,  
 "Full pardon, but I follow up the  
 quest,  
 Despite of Day and Night and Death  
 and Hell."

So when, next morn, the lord whose  
 life he saved  
 Had, some brief space, convey'd them  
 on their way  
 And left them with God-speed, Sir Gareth spake,  
 "Lead and I follow." Haughtily she  
 replied,

"I fly no more: I allow thee for an  
 hour.  
 Lion and stoat have isled together,  
 knave,  
 In time of flood. Nay, furthermore,  
 methinks  
 Some ruth is mine for thee. Back wilt  
 thou, fool?"

For hard by here is one will overthrow  
 And slay thee: then will I to court  
 again,  
 And shame the King for only yielding  
 me

My champion from the ashes of his  
 hearth."

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd courteously,  
 "Say thou thy say, and I will do my  
 deed.  
 Allow me for mine hour, and thou  
 wilt find  
 My fortunes all as fair as hers, who  
 lay  
 Among the ashes and wedded the  
 King's son."

Then to the shore of one of those  
 long loops  
 Wherethro' the serpent river coil'd,  
 they came.  
 Rough-thicketed were the banks and  
 steep; the stream  
 Full, narrow; this a bridge of single  
 arc  
 Took at a leap; and on the further  
 side  
 Arose a silk pavilion, gay with gold  
 In streaks and rays, and all Lent-lily  
 in hue,  
 Save that the dome was purple, and  
 above,  
 Crimson, a slender banneret fluttering.  
 And there before the lawless warrior  
 paced  
 Unarm'd, and calling, "Damsel, is  
 this he,  
 The champion ye have brought from  
 Arthur's hall?  
 For whom we let thee pass." "Nay,  
 nay," she said,  
 "Sir Morning-Star. The King in utter  
 scorn  
 Of thee and thy much folly hath sent  
 thee here  
 His kitchen-knave: and look thou to  
 thyself:  
 See that he fall not on thee suddenly,  
 And slay thee unarm'd: he is not  
 knight but knave."

Then at his call, "O daughters of  
 the Dawn,  
 And servants of the Morning-Star, approach  
 Arm me," from out the silken curtain-  
 folds  
 Barefooted and bareheaded three fair  
 girls  
 In gilt and rosy raiment came: their  
 feet  
 In dewy grasses glisten'd; and the  
 hair  
 All over glanced with dewdrop or with  
 gem  
 Like sparkles in the stone Avanturine.  
 These arm'd him in blue arms, and  
 gave a shield  
 Blue also, and thereon the morning  
 star.  
 And Gareth silent gazed upon the  
 knight,  
 Who stood a moment, ere his horse  
 was brought,

Glorying; and in the stream beneath  
him, shone,  
Immingled with Heaven's azure wa-  
veringly,  
The gay pavilion and the naked feet,  
His arms, the rosy raiment, and the  
star.

Then she that watch'd him, "Where-  
fore stare ye so?  
Thou shakest in thy fear: there yet is  
time:  
Flee down the valley before he get to  
horse.  
Who will cry shame? Thou art not  
knight but knave."

Said Gareth, "Damsel, whether  
knave or knight,  
Far liefer had I fight a score of times  
Than hear thee so missay me and re-  
vile.  
Fair words were best for him who  
fights for thee;  
But truly foul are better, for they send  
That strength of anger thro' mine  
arms, I know  
That I shall overthrow him."

And he that bore  
The star, being mounted, cried from  
o'er the bridge,  
"A kitchen-knave, and sent in scorn  
of me!  
Such fight not I, but answer scorn with  
scorn.  
For this were shame to do him further  
wrong  
Than set him on his feet, and take his  
horse  
And arms, and so return him to the  
King.  
Come, therefore, leave thy lady light-  
ly, knave.  
A void: for it beseemeth not a knave  
To ride with such a lady."

"Dog, thou liest.  
I spring from loftier lineage than thine  
own."  
He spake; and all at fiery speed the  
two  
Shock'd on the central bridge, and  
either spear  
Bent but not brake, and either knight  
at once,  
Hurl'd as a stone from out of a cata-  
pult  
Beyond his horse's crupper and the  
bridge,  
Fell, as if dead; but quickly rose and  
drew,  
And Gareth lash'd so fiercely with his  
brand  
He drove his enemy backward down  
the bridge,  
The damsel crying, "Well-stricken,  
kitchen-knave!"  
Till Gareth's shield was cloven; but  
one stroke

Laid him that clove it grovelling on  
the ground.

Then cried the fall'n, "Take not my  
life: I yield."  
And Gareth, "So this damsel ask it of  
me  
Good—I accord it easily as a grace."  
She reddening, "Insolent scullion: I  
of thee?  
I bound to thee for any favor ask'd!"  
"Then shall he die." And Gareth  
there unlaced  
His helmet as to slay him, but his  
shriek'd,  
"Be not so hardy, scullion, as to slay  
One nobler than thyself." "Damsel,  
thy charge  
Is an abounding pleasure to me.  
Knight,  
Thy life is thine at her command.  
Arise  
And quickly pass to Arthur's hall, and  
say  
His kitchen-knave hath sent thee.  
See thou crave  
His pardon for thy breaking of his  
laws.  
Myself, when I return, will plead for  
thee.  
Thy shield is mine—farewell; and,  
damsel, thou  
Lead, and I follow."

And fast away she fled.  
Then when he came upon her, spake,  
"Methought,  
Knave, when I watch'd thee striking  
on the bridge  
The savor of thy kitchen came upon  
me  
A little faintlier: but the wind hath  
changed:  
I scent it twentyfold." And then she  
sang,  
"O morning star' (not that tall felon  
there  
Whom thou by sorcery or unhappiness  
Or some device, hast foully over-  
thrown),  
'O morning star that smilest in the  
blue,  
O star, my morning dream hath proven  
true,  
Smile sweetly, thou! my love hath  
smiled on me."

"But thou begone, take counsel, and  
away,  
For hard by here is one that guards a  
ford—  
The second brother in their fool's par-  
able—  
Will pay thee all thy wages, and to  
boot.  
Care not for shame: thou art not  
knight but knave."

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd, laugh-  
ingly,

"Parables? Hear a parable of the knave.

When I was kitchen-knave among the rest

Fierce was the hearth, and one of my co-mates

Own'd a rough dog, to whom he cast his coat,

'Guard it,' and there was none to meddle with it.

And such a coat art thou, and thee the King

Gave me to guard, and such a dog am I,

To worry, and not to flee—and—knight or knave—

The knave that doth thee service as full knight

Is all as good, meseems, as any knight Toward thy sister's freeing."

"Ay, Sir Knave!

Ay, knave, because thou strikest as a knight

Being but knave, I hate thee all the more."

"Fair damsel, ye should worship me the more,

That, being but knave, I throw thine enemies."

"Ay, ay," she said, "but thou shalt meet thy match."

So when they touch'd the second river-loop,

Huge on a huge red horse, and all in mail

Burnish'd to blinding, shone the Noon-day Sun

Beyond a raging shallow. As if the flower,

That blows a globe of after arrowlets,

Ten thousand-fold had grown, flash'd the fierce shield,

All sun; and Gareth's eyes had flying blots

Before them when he turn'd from watching him.

He from beyond the roaring shallow roar'd,

"What doest thou, brother, in my marches here?"

And she athwart the shallow shrill'd again,

"Here is a kitchen-knave from Arthur's hall

Hath overthrown thy brother, and hath his arms."

"Ugh!" cried the Sun, and vizzing up a red

And cipher face of rounded foolishness,

Push'd horse across the foamings of the ford,

Whom Gareth met midstream: no room was there

For lance or tourney-skill: four strokes they struck

With sword, and these were mighty: the new knight

Had fear he might be shamed; but as the Sun

Heaved up a ponderous arm to strike the fifth,

The hoof of his horse slipt in the stream, the stream

Descended, and the Sun was wash'd away

Then Gareth laid his lance athwart the ford;

So drew him home; but he that would not fight,

As being all bone-battered on the rock, Yielded; and Gareth sent him to the King.

"Myself when I return will plead for thee.

Lead, and I follow." Quietly she led.

"Hath not the good wind, damsel, changed again!"

"Nay, not a point: nor art thou victor here.

There lies a ridge of slate across the ford;

His horse thereon stumbled—ay, for I saw it.

"O Sun' (not this strong fool whom thou, Sir Knave,

Hast overthrown thro' mere unhappiness),

'O Sun, that wakenest all to bliss or pain,

O moon, that layest all to sleep again, Shine sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me.'

"What knowest thou of lovesong or of love?

Nay, nay, God wot, so thou wert nobly born,

Thou hast a pleasant presence. Yea, perchance,—

"O dewy flowers that open to the sun,

O dewy flowers that close when day is done,

Blow sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me.'

"What knowest thou of flowers, except, belike,

To garnish meats with? hath not our good King

Who lent me thee, the flower of kitchen-  
end,

A foolish love for flowers? what stick ye round

The pasty? herewithal deck the boar's head?

Flowers? nay, the boar hath rose-maries and bay.

"O birds, that warble to the morning sky,

O birds that warble as the day goes by,

Sing sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me.'

"What knowest thou of birds, lark,  
 mavis, merle,  
 Linnet? what dream ye when they  
 utter forth  
 May-music growing with the growing  
 light,  
 Their sweet sun-worship? these be for  
 the snare  
 (So runs thy fancy) these be for the  
 spit,  
 Larding and basting. See thou have  
 not now  
 Larded thy last, except thou turn and  
 fly.  
 There stands the third fool of their  
 allegory."

For there beyond a bridge of treble  
 bow,  
 All in a rose-red from the west, and all  
 Naked it seem'd, and glowing in the  
 broad  
 Deep-dimpled current underncath, the  
 knight,  
 That named himself the Star of Eve-  
 ning, stood.

And Gareth, "Wherefore waits the  
 madman there  
 Naked in open dayshine?" "Nay,"  
 she cried,  
 "Not naked, only wrapt in harden'd  
 skins  
 That fit him like his own; and so ye  
 cleave  
 His armor off him, these will turn the  
 blade."

Then the third brother shouted o'er  
 the bridge,  
 "O brother-star, why shine ye here so  
 low?  
 Thy ward is higher up: but have ye  
 slain  
 The damsel's champion?" and the  
 damsel cried,

"No star of thine, but shot from Ar-  
 thur's heaven  
 With all disaster unto thine and thee!  
 For both thy younger brethren have  
 gone down  
 Before this youth; and so wilt thou,  
 Sir Star;  
 Art thou not old?"

"Old, damsel, old and hard,  
 Old, with the might and breath of  
 twenty boys."  
 Said Gareth, "Old, and over-bold in  
 brag!  
 But that same strength which threw  
 the Morning-Star  
 Can throw the Evening."

Then that other blew  
 A hard and deadly note upon the horn.  
 "Approach and arm me!" With slow  
 steps from out  
 An old storm-beaten, russet, many-  
 stain'd

Pavilion, forth a grizzled damsel came,  
 And arm'd him in old arms, and  
 brought a helm  
 With but a drying evergreen for crest,  
 And gave a shield whereon the Star of  
 Even  
 Half-tarnish'd and half-bright, his em-  
 blem, shone.  
 But when it glitter'd o'er the saddle-  
 bow,  
 They madly hurl'd together on the  
 bridge,  
 And Gareth overthrew him, lighted,  
 drew,  
 There met him drawn, and overthrew  
 him again,  
 But up like fire he started: and as oft  
 As Gareth brought him grovelling on  
 his knees,  
 So many a time he vaulted up again;  
 Till Gareth panted hard, and his great  
 heart,  
 Foredooming all his trouble was in  
 vain,  
 Labor'd within him, for he seem'd as  
 one  
 That all in later, sadder age begins  
 To war against ill uses of a life,  
 But these from all his life arise, and  
 cry,  
 "Thou hast made us lords, and canst  
 not put us down!"  
 He half despairs; so Gareth seem'd to  
 strike  
 Vainly, the damsel clamoring all the  
 while,  
 "Well done, knave-knight, well strick-  
 en, O good knight-knave—  
 O knave, as noble as any of all the  
 knights—  
 Shame me not, shame me not. I have  
 prophesied—  
 Strike, thou art worthy of the Table  
 Round—  
 His arms are old, he trusts the hard-  
 en'd skin—  
 Strike—strike—the wind will never  
 change again."  
 And Gareth hearing ever stronglier  
 smote,  
 And hew'd great pieces of his armor off  
 him,  
 But lash'd in vain against the hard-  
 en'd skin,  
 And could not wholly bring him under,  
 more  
 Than loud Southwesterns, rolling ridge  
 on ridge,  
 The buoy that rides at sea, and dips  
 and springs  
 Forever: till at length Sir Gareth's  
 brand  
 Clash'd his, and brake it utterly to the  
 hilt.  
 "I have thee now;" but forth that  
 other sprang,  
 And, all unknighlike, writhed his  
 wiry arms  
 Around him, till he felt, despite his  
 mail,

Strangled, but straining ev'n his utter-  
most

Cast, and so hurl'd him headlong o'er  
the bridge

Down to the river, sink or swim, and  
cried,

"Lead, and I follow."

But the damsel said,

"I lead no longer; ride thou at my  
side;

Thou art the kingliest of all kitchen-  
knaves.

"O trefoil, sparkling on the rainy  
plain,

O rainbow with three colors after rain,  
Shine sweetly: thrice my love hath  
smiled on me."

"Sir,—and, good faith, I fain had  
added—Knight,

But that I heard thee call thyself a  
knave,—

Shamed am I that I so rebuked, re-  
viled,

Missaid thee; noble I am; and thought  
the King

Scorn'd me and mine; and now thy  
pardon, friend,

For thou hast ever answer'd courte-  
ously,

And wholly bold thou art, and meek  
withal

As any of Arthur's best, but, being  
knave,

Hast mazed my wit: I marvel what  
thou art."

"Damsel," he said, "ye be not all to  
blame,

Saving that ye mistrusted our good  
King

Would handle scorn, or yield thee,  
asking, one

Not fit to cope thy quest. Ye said  
your say;

Mine answer was my deed. Good  
sooth! I hold

He scarce is knight, yea but half-man,  
nor meet

To fight for gentle damsel, he, who  
lets

His heart be stirr'd with any foolish  
heat

At any gentle damsel's waywardness.  
Shamed? care not! thy foul sayings

fought for me:

And seeing now thy words are fair,  
methinks,

There rides no knight, not Lancelot,  
his great self,

Hath force to quell me."

Nigh upon that hour

When the lone hern forgets his melan-  
choly,

Lets down his other leg, and stretch-  
ing dreams.

Of goodly supper in the distant pool,  
Then turn'd the noble damsel smiling  
at him,

And told him of a cavern hard at hand,  
Where bread and baken meats and  
good red wine

Of Southland, which the Lady Lyon-  
ors

Had sent her coming champion, waited  
him.

Anon they past a narrow comb.  
wherein

Were slabs of rock with figures, knights  
on horse

Sculptured, and deckt in slowly wan-  
ing hues.

"Sir Knave, my knight, a hermit once  
was here,

Whose holy hand hath fashion'd on  
the rock

The war of Time against the soul of  
man.

And yon four fools have suck'd their  
allegory

From these damp walls, and taken  
but the form.

Know ye not these?" and Gareth  
lookt and read—

In letters like to those the vexillary  
Hath left crag-carven o'er the stream-  
ing Gelt—

"PHOSPHORUS," then "MERIDIES"—  
"HESPERUS"—

"Nox"—"MORS," beneath five fig-  
ures, armed men,

Slab after slab, their faces forward all,  
And running down the Soul, a Shape

that fled

With broken wings, torn raiment and  
loose hair,

For help and shelter to the hermit's  
cave.

"Follow the faces, and we find it.  
Look,

Who comes behind?"

For one—delay'd at first

Thro' helping back the dislocated Kay  
To Camelot, then by what thereafter

chanced,

The damsel's headlong error thro' the  
wood—

Sir Lancelot, having swum the river-  
loops—

His blue shield-lions cover'd—softly  
drew

Behind the twain, and when he saw  
the star

Gleam, on Sir Gareth's turning to him,  
cried,

"Stay, felon knight, I avenge me for  
my friend."

And Gareth crying prick'd against the  
cry;

But when they closed—in a moment—  
at one touch

Of that skill'd spear, the wonder of  
the world—

Went sliding down so easily, and fell,  
That when he found the grass within  
his hand,

He laugh'd; the laughter jarr'd upon  
Lynette:

Harshly she ask'd him, "Shamed and overthrown,  
And tumbled back into the kitchen-knave,  
Why laugh ye? that ye blew your boast in vain?"  
"Nay, noble damsel, but that I, the son  
Of old King Lot and good Queen Bellisent,  
And victor of the bridges and the ford,  
And knight of Arthur, here lie thrown by whom  
I know not, all thro' mere unhappiness—  
Device and sorcery and unhappiness—  
Out, sword; we are thrown!" and Lancelot answer'd, "Prince,  
O Gareth—thro' the mere unhappiness  
Of one who came to help thee not to harm,  
Lancelot, and all as glad to find thee whole,  
As on the day when Arthur knighted him."

Then Gareth, "Thou—Lancelot!—thine the hand  
That threw me? An some chance to mar the boast  
Thy brethren of thee make—which could not chance—  
Had sent thee down before a lesser spear  
Shamed had I been and sad—O Lancelot—thou!"

Whereat the maiden, petulant, "Lancelot,  
Why came ye not, when call'd? and wherefore now  
Come ye, not call'd? I gloried in my knave,  
Who being still rebuked, would answer still  
Courteous as any knight—but now, if knight,  
The marvel dies, and leaves me fool'd and trick'd,  
And only wandering wherefore play'd upon:  
And doubtful whether I and mine be scorn'd.  
Where should be truth if not in Arthur's hall,  
In Arthur's presence? Knight, knave, prince and fool,  
I hate thee and forever."

And Lancelot said,  
"Blessed be thou, Sir Gareth! knight art thou  
To the King's best wish, O damsel, be ye wise  
To call him shamed, who is but overthrown?  
Thrown have I been, nor once but many a time.  
Victor from vanquish'd issues at the last.

And overthrower from being overthrown.  
With sword we have not striven; and thy good horse  
And thou art weary; yet not less I felt  
Thy manhood thro' that wearied lance of thine.  
Well hast thou done; for all the stream is freed,  
And thou hast wreak'd his justice on his foes,  
And when reviled, hast answer'd graciously,  
And makest merry, when overthrown.  
Prince Knight,  
Hail, Knight and Prince, and of our Table Round!"

And then when turning to Lynette he told  
The tale of Gareth, petulantly she said,  
"Ay well—ay well—for worse than being fool'd  
Of others, is to fool one's self. A cave, Sir Lancelot is hard by, with meats and drinks  
And forage for the horse, and flint for fire.  
But all about it flies a honeysuckle. Seek, till we find." And when they sought and found,  
Sir Gareth drank and ate, and all his life  
Past into sleep; on whom the maiden gazed.  
"Sound sleep be thine! sound cause to sleep hath thou.  
Wake lusty! Seem I not as tender to him  
As any mother? Ay, but such a one  
As all day long hath rated at her child,  
And vext his day, but blesses him asleep—  
Good lord, how sweetly smells the honeysuckle  
In the hush'd night, as if the world were one  
Of utter peace, and love, and gentleness!  
O Lancelot, Lancelot"—and she clapt her hands—  
"Full merry am I to find my goodly knave  
Is knight and noble. See now, sworn have I,  
Else yon black felon had not let me pass,  
To bring thee back to do the battle with him.  
Thus an thou goest, he will fight thee first;  
Who doubts thee victor? so will my knight-knave  
Miss the full flower of the accomplishment."  
Said Lancelot, "Peradventure have ye name,

May know my shield. Let Gareth, an  
 he will,  
 Change his for mine, and take my  
 charger, fresh,  
 Not to be spur'd, loving the battle as  
 well  
 As he that rides him." "Lancelot-  
 like," she said,  
 "Courteous in this, Lord Lancelot, as  
 in all."

And Gareth, wakening, fiercely  
 clutch'd the shield;  
 "Ramp, ye lance-splintering lions, on  
 whom all spears  
 Are rotten sticks! ye seem agape to  
 roar!  
 Yea, ramp and roar at leaving of your  
 lord!—  
 Care not, good beasts, so well I care  
 for you.  
 O noble Lancelot, from my hold on  
 these  
 Streams virtue—fire—thro' one that  
 will not shame  
 Even the shadow of Lancelot under  
 shield.  
 Hence: let us go."

Silent the silent field  
 They traversed. Arthur's harp thro'  
 summer-wan,  
 In counter motion to the clouds, al-  
 lured  
 The glance of Gareth dreaming on his  
 liege.  
 A star shot: "Lo," said Gareth, "the  
 foe falls!"  
 An owl whoopt: "Hark the victor  
 pealing there!"  
 Suddenly she that rode upon his left  
 Clung to the shield that Lancelot lent  
 him, crying,  
 "Yield, yield him this again: 'tis he  
 must fight:  
 I curse the tongue that all thro' yester-  
 day  
 Reviled thee, and hath wrought on  
 Lancelot now  
 To lend thee horse and shield: won-  
 ders ye have done;  
 Miracles ye cannot: here is glory enow  
 In having flung the three: I see thee  
 maim'd,  
 Mangled: I swear thou canst not fling  
 the fourth."

"And wherefore, damsel? tell me  
 all ye know.  
 Ye cannot scare me; nor rough face,  
 or voice,  
 Brute bulk of limb, or boundless sav-  
 agery  
 Appall me from the quest."

"Nay, Prince," she cried,  
 "God wot, I never look'd upon the  
 face,  
 Seeing he never rides abroad by day;  
 But watch'd him have I like a phan-  
 tom pass

Chilling the night: nor have I heard  
 the voice.  
 Always he made his mouthpiece of a  
 page  
 Who came and went, and still reported  
 him  
 As closing in himself the strength of  
 ten,  
 And when his anger tare him, massa-  
 cring  
 Man, woman, lad and girl—yea the  
 soft babe—  
 Some hold that he hath swallow'd in-  
 fant flesh,  
 Monster! O prince, I went for Lancelot first,  
 The quest is Lancelot's: give him  
 back the shield."

Said Gareth laughing, "An he fight  
 for this,  
 Belike he wins it as the better man:  
 Thus—and not else?"

But Lancelot on him urged  
 All the devisings of their chivalry  
 Where one might meet a mightier  
 than himself;  
 How best to manage horse, lance,  
 sword and shield,  
 And so fill up the gap where force  
 might fail  
 With skill and fineness. Instant were  
 his words.

Then Gareth, "Here be rules. I  
 know but one—  
 To dash against mine enemy and to  
 win.  
 Yet have I watch'd thee victor in the  
 joust,  
 And seen thy way." "Heaven help  
 thee," sigh'd Lynette.

Then for a space, and under cloud  
 that grew  
 To thunder-gloom paling all stars,  
 they rode  
 In converse till she made her palfrey  
 halt,  
 Lifted an arm, and softly whisper'd,  
 "There."  
 And all the three were silent seeing,  
 pitch'd  
 Beside the Castle Perilous on flat field,  
 A huge pavilion like a mountain peak  
 Sunder the glooming crimson on the  
 marge,  
 Black, with black banner, and a long  
 black horn  
 Beside it hanging; which Sir Gareth  
 graspt,  
 And so, before the two could hinder  
 him,  
 Sent all his heart and breath thro' all  
 the horn.  
 Echo'd the walls; a light twinkled;  
 anon  
 Came lights and lights, and once again  
 he blew:

Whereon were hollow tramlings up  
and down  
And muffled voices heard, and shadows  
past;  
Till high above him, circled with her  
maids,  
The Lady Lyonors at a window stood,  
Beautiful among lights, and waving to  
him  
White hands, and courtesy; but when  
the Prince  
Three times had blown—after long  
hush—at last—  
The huge pavilion slowly yielded up,  
Thro' those black foldings, that which  
housed therein.  
High on a nightblack horse, in night-  
black arms,  
With white breast-bone, and barren  
ribs of Death,  
And crown'd with fleshless laughter—  
some ten steps—  
In the half-light—thro' the dim dawn  
—advanced  
The monster, and, then paused, and  
spake no word.

But Gareth spake and all indignantly,  
“Fool, for thou hast, men say, the  
strength of ten,  
Canst thou not trust the limbs thy God  
hath given,  
But must, to make the terror of thee  
more,  
Trick thyself out in ghastly imageries  
Of that which Life hath done with, and  
the clod,  
Less dull than thou, will hide with  
mantling flowers  
As if for pity?” But he spake no  
word;  
Which set the horror higher: a maiden  
swoon'd;  
The Lady Lyonors wrung her hands and  
wept,  
As doom'd to be the bride of Night and  
Death;  
Sir Gareth's head prickled beneath his  
helm;  
And ev'n Sir Lancelot thro' his warm  
blood felt  
Ice strike, and all that mark'd him were  
aghastr.

At once Sir Lancelot's charger fiercely  
neigh'd—  
At once the black horse bounded for-  
ward with him.  
Then those that did not blink the ter-  
ror, saw  
That Death was cast to ground, and  
slowly rose.  
But with one stroke Sir Gareth split  
the skull.  
Half fell to right and half to left and  
lay.  
Then with a stronger buffet he clove  
the helm  
As throughly as the skull; and out  
from this

Issued the bright face of a blooming  
boy  
Fresh as a flower new-born, and crying,  
“Knight,  
Slay me not: my three brethren bad me  
do it,  
To make a horror all about the house,  
And stay the world from Lady Lyonors.  
They never dream'd the passes would  
be past.”  
Answer'd Sir Gareth graciously to one  
Not many a moon his younger, “My  
fair child,  
What madness made thee challenge the  
chief knight  
Of Arthur's hall?” “Fair Sir, they  
bad me do it.  
They hate the King, and Lancelot, the  
King's friend,  
They hoped to slay him somewhere on  
the stream,  
They never dream'd the passes could  
be past.”

Then sprang the happier day from  
underground;  
And Lady Lyonors and her house, with  
dance  
And revel and song, made merry over  
Death,  
As being after all their foolish fears  
And horrors only proven a blooming  
boy.  
So large mirth lived and Gareth won  
the quest.

And he that told the tale in older  
times  
Says that Sir Gareth wedded Lyonors,  
But he, that told it later, says Lynette,

#### GERAINT AND ENID.

THE brave Geraint, a knight of Ar-  
thur's court,  
A tributary prince of Devon, one  
Of that great order of the Table Round,  
Had married Enid, Yniol's only child,  
And loved her, as he loved the light of  
Heaven.  
And as the light of Heaven varies,  
now  
At sunrise, now at sunset, now by night  
With moon and trembling stars, so  
loved Geraint  
To make her beauty vary day by day,  
In crimsons and in purples and in gems,  
And Enid, but to please her husband's  
eye,  
Who first had found and loved her in a  
state  
Of broken fortunes, daily fronted him  
In some fresh splendor; and the Queen  
herself,  
Grateful to Prince Geraint for service  
done,  
Loved her, and often with her own  
white hands

Array'd and deck'd her, as the loveliest,  
Nex<sup>t</sup> after her own self, in all the  
court.

And Enid loved the Queen, and with  
true heart

Adored her, as the stateliest and the  
best

And loveliest of all women upon earth.  
And seeing them so tender and so  
close,

Long in their common love rejoiced  
Geraint.

But when a rumor rose about the Queen,  
Touching her guilty love for Lancelot,  
Tho' yet there lived no proof, nor yet  
was heard

The world's loud whisper breaking  
into storm,

Not less Geraint believed it; and there  
fell

A horror on him, lest his gentle wife,  
Thro' that great tenderness for Guinevere,

Had suffer'd, or should suffer any  
taint

In nature: wherefore going to the  
king.

He made this pretext, that his prince-  
dom lay

Close on the borders of a territory,  
Wherein were bandit earls, and caitiff  
knights,

Assassins, and all fliers from the hand  
Of Justice, and whatever loathes a  
law:

And therefore, till the king himself  
should please

To cleanse this common sewer of all  
his realm,

He craved a fair permission to depart,  
And there defend his marches; and  
the king

Mused for a little on his plea, but, last,  
Allowing it, the Prince and Enid  
rode,

And fifty knights rode with them, to  
the shores

Of Severn, and they past to their own  
land;

Where, thinking, that if ever yet was  
wife

True to her lord, mine shall be so to  
me,

He compass'd her with sweet observ-  
ances

And worship, never leaving her, and  
grew

Forgetful of his promise to the king,  
Forgetful of the falcon and the hunt,  
Forgetful of the tilt and tournament,  
Forgetful of his glory and his name,  
Forgetful of his principedom and its  
cares.

And this forgetfulness was hateful to  
her.

And by and by the people, when they  
met

In twos and threes, or fuller companies,  
Began to scoff and jeer and babble of  
him

As of a prince whose manhood was all  
gone,  
And molten down in mere uxorious-  
ness.

And this she gather'd from the people's  
eyes:

This too the woman who attired her  
head,

To please her, dwelling on his boundless  
love,

Told Enid, and they sadden'd her the  
more:

And day by day she thought to tell  
Geraint,

But could not out of bashful delicacy;  
While he that watch'd her sadden, was  
the more

Suspicious that her nature had a taint.

At last it chanced that on a summer  
morn

(They sleeping each by either) the new  
sun

Beat thro' the blindless casement of  
the room,

And heated the strong warrior in his  
dreams;

Who, moving, cast the coverlet aside,  
And bared the knotted column of his  
throat,

The massive square of his heroic  
breast,

And arms on which the standing mus-  
cle sloped,

As slopes a wild brook o'er a little  
stone,

Running too vehemently to break upon  
it.

And Enid woke and sat beside the  
couch,

Admiring him, and thought within  
herself,

Was ever man so grandly made as he?  
Then, like a shadow, past the people's  
talk

And accusation of uxoriousness  
Across her mind, and bowing over  
him,

Low to her own heart piteously she  
said:

"O noble breast and all-puissant  
arms,

Am I the cause, I the poor cause that  
men

Reproach you, saying all your force is  
gone?

I am the cause because I dare not  
speak

And tell him what I think and what  
they say.

And yet I hate that he should linger  
here:

I cannot love my lord and not his  
name.

Far liefer had I gird his harness on  
him,

And ride with him to battle and stand  
by,

And watch his mightful hand striking  
great blows

At caitiffs and at wrongers of the world.  
 Far better were I laid in the dark earth,  
 Not hearing any more his noble voice,  
 Not to be folded more in these dear arms,  
 And darken'd from the high light in his eyes,  
 Than that my lord thro' me should suffer shame.  
 Am I so bold, and could I so stand by,  
 And see my dear lord wounded in the strife,  
 Or maybe pierced to death before mine eyes,  
 And yet not dare to tell him what I think,  
 And how men slur him, saying all his force  
 Is melted into mere effeminacy?  
 O me, I fear that I am no true wife."

Half inwardly, half audibly she spoke,  
 And the strong passion in her made her weep  
 True tears upon his broad and naked breast,  
 And these awoke him, and by great mischance  
 He heard but fragments of her later words,  
 And that she fear'd she was not a true wife.  
 And then he thought, "In spite of all my care,  
 For all my pains, poor man, for all my pains,  
 She is not faithful to me, and I see her Weeping for some gay knight in Arthur's hall."  
 Then tho' he loved and revered her too much  
 To dream she could be guilty of foul act,  
 Right thro' his manful breast darted the pang  
 That makes a man, in the sweet face of her  
 Whom he loves most, lonely and miserable.  
 At this he hurl'd his huge limbs out of bed,  
 And shook his drowsy squire awake and cried,  
 "My charger and her palfrey," then to her,  
 "I will ride forth into the wilderness;  
 For tho' it seems my spurs are yet to win,  
 I have not fall'n so low as some would wish.  
 And you, put on your worst and meanest dress  
 And ride with me." And Enid ask'd, amazed,  
 "If Enid errs, let Enid learn her fault."  
 But he, "I charge you, ask not but obey."

Then she bethought ther of a faded silk,  
 A faded mantle and a faded veil,  
 And moving toward a cedarn cabinet,  
 Wherein she kept them folded reverently  
 With sprigs of summer laid between the folds,  
 She took them, and array'd herself therein,  
 Remembering when first he came on her  
 Drest in that dress, and how he loved her in it,  
 And all her foolish fears about the dress,  
 And all his journey to her, as himself  
 Had told her, and their coming to the court.

For Arthur on the Whitsuntide before  
 Held court at old Caerleon upon Usk  
 There on a day, he sitting high in hall,  
 Before him came a forester of Dean,  
 Wet from the woods, with notice of a hart  
 Taller than all his fellows, milky-white,  
 First seen that day: these things he told the king.  
 Then the good king gave order to let blow  
 His horns for hunting on the morrow morn.  
 And when the Queen petition'd for his leave  
 To see the hunt, allow'd it easily.  
 So with the morning all the court were gone.  
 But Guinevere lay late into the morn,  
 Lost in sweet dreams, and dreaming of her love  
 For Lancelot, and forgetful of the hunt;  
 But rose at last, a single maiden with her,  
 Took horse, and forded Usk, and gain'd the wood;  
 There, on a little knoll beside it, stay'd  
 Waiting to hear the hounds; but heard instead  
 A sudden sound of hoofs, for Prince Geraint,  
 Late also, wearing neither hunting-dress  
 Nor weapon, save a golden-hilted brand,  
 Came quickly flashing thro' the shallow ford  
 Behind them, and so gallop'd up the knoll.  
 A purple scarf, at either end whereof  
 There swung an apple of the purest gold,  
 Sway'd round about him, as he gallop'd up  
 To join them, glancing like a dragon-fly  
 In summer suit and silks of holiday.  
 Low bow'd the tributary Prince, and she,

Sweetly and stately, and with all  
 grace  
 Of womanhood and queenhood, an-  
 swer'd him :  
 "Late, late, Sir Prince," she said,  
 "later than we !"  
 "Yea, noble Queen," he answer'd,  
 "and so late  
 That I but come like you to see the  
 hunt,  
 Not join it." "Therefore wait with  
 me," she said ;  
 "For on this little knoll, if anywhere,  
 There is good chance that we shall  
 hear the hounds :  
 Here often they break covert at our  
 feet."

And while they listen'd for the dis-  
 tant hunt,  
 And chiefly for the baying of Cavall,  
 King Arthur's hound of deepest mouth,  
 there rode  
 Full slowly by a knight, lady, and  
 dwarf ;  
 Whereof the dwarf lagg'd latest, and  
 the knight  
 Had visor up, and show'd a youthful  
 face,  
 Imperious, and of haughtiest linea-  
 ments.  
 And Guinevere, not mindful of his  
 face  
 In the king's hall, desired his name,  
 and sent  
 Her maiden to demand it of the dwarf ;  
 Who being vicious, old, and irritable,  
 And doubling all his master's vice of  
 pride,  
 Made answer sharply that she should  
 not know.  
 "Then will I ask it of himself," she  
 said.  
 "Nay, by my faith, thou shalt not,"  
 cried the dwarf ;  
 "Thou art not worthy ev'n to speak  
 of him ;"  
 And when she put her horse toward  
 the knight,  
 Struck at her with his whip, and she  
 return'd  
 Indignant to the Queen ; whereat  
 Geraint  
 Exclaiming, "Surely I will learn the  
 name."  
 Made sharply to the dwarf, and ask'd  
 it of him,  
 Who answer'd as before ; and when  
 the Prince  
 Had put his horse in motion toward  
 the knight,  
 Struck at him with his whip, and cut  
 his cheek.  
 The Prince's blood spirted upon the  
 scarf,  
 Dyeing it ; and his quick, instinctive  
 hand  
 Caught at the hilt, as to abolish him :  
 But he, from his exceeding manful-  
 ness

And pure nobility of temperament,  
 Wroth to be wroth at such a worm, re-  
 frain'd  
 From ev'n a word, and so returning  
 said :

"I will avenge this insult, noble  
 Queen,  
 Done in your maiden's person to your-  
 self :  
 And I will track this vermin to their  
 earths :  
 For tho' I ride unarm'd, I do not doubt  
 To find, at some place I shall come at,  
 arms  
 On loan, or else for pledge ; and, being  
 found,  
 Then will I fight him, and will break  
 his pride.  
 And on the third day, will again be  
 here,  
 So that I be not fall'n in fight. Fare-  
 well."

"Farewell, fair Prince," answer'd  
 the stately Queen.  
 "Be prosperous in this journey, as in  
 all ;  
 And may ye light on all things that ye  
 love,  
 And live to wed with her whom first ye  
 love :  
 But ere ye wed with any, bring your  
 bride,  
 And I, were she the daughter of a king,  
 Yea, tho' she were a beggar from the  
 hedge,  
 Will clothe her for her bridals like the  
 sun."

And Prince Geraint, now thinking  
 that he heard  
 The noble hart at bay, now the far  
 horn,  
 A little vext at losing of the hunt,  
 A little at the vile occasion, rode,  
 By ups and downs, thro' many a grassy  
 glade  
 And valley, with fixt eye following the  
 three.  
 At last they issued from the world of  
 wood,  
 And climb'd upon a fair and even  
 ridge,  
 And show'd themselves against the  
 sky, and sank.  
 And thither came Geraint, and under-  
 neath  
 Beheld the long street of a little town  
 In a long valley, on one side whereof,  
 White from the mason's hand, a fort-  
 ress rose ;  
 And on one side a castle in decay,  
 Beyond a bridge that spann'd a dry  
 ravine :  
 And out of town and valley came a  
 noise  
 As of a broad brook o'er a shingly bed  
 Brawling, or like a clamor of the rooks  
 At distance, ere they settle for the  
 night.

And onward to the fortress rode the three,  
 And enter'd, and were lost behind the walls.  
 "So," thought Geraint, "I have track'd him to his earth."  
 And down the long street riding wearily,  
 Found every hostel full, and everywhere  
 Was hammer laid to hoof, and the hot hiss  
 And bustling whistle of the youth who scour'd  
 His master's armor; and of such a one he ask'd, "What means the tumult in the town?"  
 Who told him, scouring still "The sparrow-hawk!"  
 Then riding close behind an ancient churl,  
 Who, smitten by the dusty sloping beam,  
 Went sweating underneath a sack of corn,  
 Ask'd yet once more what meant the hubbub here?  
 Who answer'd gruffly, "Ugh! the sparrow-hawk."  
 Then riding further past an armorer's, Who, with back turn'd, and bow'd above his work,  
 Sat riveting a helmet on his knee,  
 He put the self-same query, but the man  
 Not turning round, nor looking at him, said:  
 "Friend, he that labors for the sparrow-hawk  
 Has little time for idle questioners." Whereat Geraint flash'd into sudden spleen:  
 "A thousand pips eat up your sparrow-hawk!  
 Tits, wrens, and all wing'd nothings peck him dead!  
 Ye think the rustic cackle of your bourg  
 The murmur of the world! What is it to me?  
 O wretched set of sparrows, one and all,  
 Who pipe of nothing but of sparrow-hawks!  
 Speak, if ye be not like the rest, hawk-mad,  
 Where can I get me harborage for the night?  
 And arms, arms, arms to fight my enemy? Speak!"  
 At this the armorer turning all amazed  
 And seeing one so gay in purple silks,  
 Came forward with the helmet yet in hand  
 And answer'd, "Pardon me, O stranger knight;  
 We hold a tourney here to-morrow morn,  
 And there is scanty time for half the work.

Arms? truth! I know not: all are wanted here.  
 Harborage? truth, good truth, I know not, save,  
 It may be, at Earl Yniol's, o'er the bridge  
 Yonder." He spoke and fell to work again.

Then rode Geraint, a little spleenful yet,  
 Across the bridge that spann'd the dry ravine.  
 There musing sat the hoary-headed Earl,  
 (His dress a suit of fray'd magnificence,  
 Once fit for feasts of ceremony) and said:  
 "Whither, fair son?" to whom Geraint replied,  
 "O friend, I seek a harborage for the night."  
 Then Yniol, "Enter therefore and partake  
 The slender entertainment of a house  
 Once rich, now poor, but ever open-door'd."

"Thanks, venerable friend," replied Geraint;  
 "So that ye do not serve me sparrow-hawks  
 For supper, I will enter, I will eat  
 With all the passion of a twelve hours' fast."  
 Then sigh'd and smiled the hoary-headed Earl,  
 And answer'd, "Graver cause than yours is mine  
 To curse this hedgerow thief, the sparrow-hawk!  
 But in, go in; for save yourself desire it,  
 We will not touch upon him ev'n in jest."

Then rode Geraint into the castle court,  
 His charger trampling many a prickly star  
 Of sprouted thistle on the broken stones.  
 He look'd and saw that all was ruinous.  
 Here stood a shatter'd archway plumed with fern;  
 And here had fall'n a great part of a tower,  
 Whole, like a crag that tumbles from the cliff,  
 And like a crag was gay with wilding flowers:  
 And high above a piece of turret stair,  
 Worn by the feet that now were silent, wound  
 Bare to the sun, and monstrous ivy-stems  
 Clasp'd the gray walls with hairy fibred arms,  
 And suck'd the joining of the stones  
 And look'd

A knot, beneath, of snakes, aloft, a grove.

And while he waited in the castle court,  
The voice of Enid, Yniol's daughter,  
rang  
Clear thro' the open casement of the Hall,  
Singing; and as the sweet voice of a bird,  
Heard by the lander in a lonely isle,  
Moves him to think what kind of bird it is  
That sings so delicately clear, and make  
Conjecture of the plumage and the form;  
So the sweet voice of Enid moved Geraint;  
And made him like a man abroad at morn  
When first the liquid note beloved of men  
Comes flying over many a windy wave  
To Britain, and in April suddenly  
Breaks from a coppice gemm'd with green and red,  
And he suspends his converse with a friend,  
Or it may be the labor of his hands,  
To think or say, "there is the nightingale;"  
So fared it with Geraint, who thought and said,  
"Here, by God's grace, is the one voice for me."

It chanced the song that Enid sang  
was one  
Of Fortune and her wheel, and Enid sang:

"Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel and lower the proud;  
Turn thy wild wheel thro' sunshine, storm, and cloud;  
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.

"Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with smile or frown;  
With that wild wheel we go not up or down;  
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great.

"Smile and we smile, the lords of many lands;  
Frown and we smile, the lords of our own hands;  
For man is man and master of his fate.

"Turn turn thy wheel above the staring crowd;  
Thy wheel and thou are shadows in the cloud;  
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate."

"Hark, by the bird's song you may learn the nest"

Said Yniol; "Enter quickly." Enter  
ing then,  
Right o'er a mount of newly-fallen stones,  
The dusky rafter'd many-cobweb'd Hall,  
He found an ancient dame in dim brocade;  
And near her, like a blossom vermeil white,  
That lightly breaks a faded flower sheath,  
Moved the fair Enid, all in faded silk.  
Her daughter. In a moment thought Geraint,  
"Here by God's rood is the one maid for me."  
But none spake word except the hoary Earl:  
"Enid, the good knight's horse stands in the court;  
Take him to stall, and give him corn, and then  
Go to the town and buy us flesh and wine;  
And we will make us merry as we may.  
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great."

He spake: the Prince, as Enid past him, fain  
To follow, strode a stride, but Yniol caught  
His purple scarf, and held, and said  
"Forbear!  
Rest! the good house, tho' ruin'd, O my Son,  
Endures not that her guest should serve himself."  
And reverencing the custom of the house  
Geraint, from utter courtesy, forbore.

So Enid took his charger to the stall;  
And after went her way across the bridge,  
And reach'd the town, and while the Prince and Earl  
Yet spoke together, came again with one,  
A youth, that following with a costrel bore  
The means of goodly welcome, flesh and wine,  
And Enid brought sweet cakes to make them cheer,  
And in her veil enfolded, manchet bread.  
And then, because their hall must also serve  
For kitchen, boil'd the flesh, and spread the board,  
And stood behind, and waited on the three.  
And seeing her so sweet and serviceable,  
Geraint had longing in him evermore  
To stoop and kiss the tender little thumb,  
That cross the trencher as she laid it down:

But after all had eaten, then Geraint,  
For now the wine made summer in his  
veins,  
Let his eye rove in following, or rest  
On Enid at her lowly handmaid-work,  
Now here, now there, about the dusky  
hall;

Then suddenly address the hoary Earl :

"Fair Host and Earl, I pray your  
courtesy ;

This sparrow-hawk, what is he, tell me  
of him.

His name ? but no, good faith, I will  
not have it :

For if he be the knight whom late I saw  
Ride into that new fortress by your  
town,

White from the mason's hand, then  
have I sworn

From his own lips to have it—I am  
Geraint

Of Devon—for this morning when the  
Queen

Sent her own maiden to demand the  
name,

His dwarf, a vicious under-shapen  
thing,

Struck at her with his whip, and she  
return'd

Indignant to the Queen ; and then I  
swore

That I would track this caitiff to his  
hold,

And fight and break his pride, and have  
it of him.

And all unarm'd I rode, and thought  
to find

Arms in your town, where all the men  
are mad ;

They take the rustic murmur of their  
bourg

For the great wave that echoes round  
the world ;

They would not hear me speak : but if  
ye know

Where I can light on arms, or if your-  
self

Should have them, tell me, seeing I  
have sworn

That I will break his pride and learn  
his name,

Avenging this great insult done the  
Queen."

Then cried Earl Yniol. "Art thou  
he indeed,

Geraint, a name far-sounded among  
men

For noble deeds ? and truly I, when  
first

I saw you moving by me on the bridge,  
Felt you were somewhat, yea and by

your state

And presence might have guess'd you  
one of those

That eat in Arthur's hall at Camelot.  
Nor speak I now from foolish flattery ;

For this dear child hath often heard  
me praise

Your feats of arms, and often when I  
paused

Hath ask'd again, and ever loved to  
hear ;

So grateful is the noise of noble deeds  
To noble hearts who see but acts of  
wrong :

O never yet had woman such a pair  
Of suitors as this maiden ; first Li-

mours,

A creature wholly given to brawls and  
wine.

Drunk even when he woo'd ; and be he  
dead

I know not, but he past to the wild  
land.

The second was your foe, the sparrow-  
hawk,

My curse, my nephew—I will not let  
his name

Slip from my lips if I can help it—he,  
When I that knew him fierce and tur-

bulent

Refused her to him, then his pride  
awoke ;

And since the proud man often is the  
mean,

He sow'd a slander in the common ear,  
Affirming that his father left him gold,

And in my charge, which was not ren-  
der'd to him ;

Bribed with large promises the men  
who served

About my person, the more easily  
Because my means were somewhat

broken into

Thro' open doors and hospitality ;  
Raised my own town against me in the

night

Before my Enid's birthday, sack'd my  
house ;

From mine own earldom foully ousted  
me ;

Built that new fort to overawe my  
friends,

For truly there are those who love me  
yet ;

And keeps me in this ruinous castle  
here,

Where doubtless he would put me soon  
to death,

But that his pride too much despises  
me :

And I myself sometimes despise my-  
self ;

For I have let men be, and have their  
way ;

Am much too gentle, have not used my  
power :

Nor know I whether I be very base  
Or very manful, whether very wise

Or very foolish ; only this I know,  
That whatsoever evil happen to me,

I seem to suffer nothing heart or limb,  
But can endure it all most patiently."

"Well said, true heart," replied Ge-  
raint, "but arms :

That if the sparrow-hawk, this nephew,  
fight,

In next day's tourney I may break his  
pride."  
And Yniol answer'd "Arms, indeed,  
but old  
And rusty, old and rusty, Prince Ge-  
raint,  
Are mine, and therefore at your ask-  
ing, yours.  
But in this tournament can no man  
tilt,  
Except the lady he loves best be there.  
Two forks are fixt into the meadow  
ground,  
And over these is laid a silver wand,  
And over that is placed the sparrow-  
hawk,  
The prize of beauty for the fairest  
there.  
And this, what knight soever be in  
field  
Lays claim to for the lady at his side,  
And tilts with my good nephew there-  
upon,  
Who being apt at arms and big of bone  
Has ever won it for the lady with him,  
And toppling over all antagonism  
Has earn'd himself the name of spar-  
row-hawk.  
But you, that have no lady, cannot  
fight."

To whom Geraint with eyes all bright  
replied,  
Leaning a little toward him, "Your  
leave!  
Let me lay lance in rest, O noble host,  
For this dear child, because I never  
saw,  
Tho' having seen all beauties of our  
time,  
Nor can see elsewhere, anything so  
fair.  
And if I fall her name will yet remain  
Untarnish'd as before; but if I live,  
So aid me Heaven when at mine utter-  
most,  
As I will make her truly my true  
wife."

Then, howsoever patient, Yniol's  
heart  
Danced in his bosom, seeing better  
days.  
And looking round he saw not Enid  
there,  
(Who hearing her own name had slept  
away)  
But that old dame, to whom full ten-  
derly  
And fondling all her hand in his he  
said,  
"Mother, a maiden is a tender thing,  
And best by her that bore her under-  
stood.  
Go thou to rest, but ere thou go to rest  
Tell her, and prove her heart toward  
the Prince."

So spake the kindly-hearted Earl,  
and she

With frequent smile and nod departing  
found,  
Half disarray'd as to her rest, the girl;  
Whom first she kiss'd on either cheek,  
and then  
On either shining shoulder laid a hand,  
And kept her off and gazed upon her  
face,  
And told her all their converse in the  
hall,  
Proving her heart: but never light and  
shade  
Coursed one another more on open  
ground  
Beneath a troubled heaven, than red  
and pale  
Across the face of Enid hearing her;  
While slowly falling as a scale that  
falls,  
When weight is added only grain by  
grain,  
Sank her sweet head upon her gentle  
breast;  
Nor did she lift an eye nor speak a  
word,  
Rapt in the fear and in the wonder of  
it;  
So moving without answer to her rest  
She found no rest, and ever fail'd to  
draw  
The quiet night into her blood, but lay  
Contemplating her own unworthiness;  
And when the pale and bloodless east  
began  
To quicken to the sun, arose, and  
raised  
Her mother too, and hand in hand they  
moved  
Down to the meadow where the jousts  
were held,  
And waited there for Yniol and Ge-  
raint.

And thither came the twain, and  
when Geraint  
Beheld her first in field, awaiting him,  
He felt, were she the prize of bodily  
force,  
Himself beyond the rest pushing could  
move  
The chair of Idris. Yniol's rusted arms  
Were on his princely person, but thro'  
these  
Princelike his bearing, shone; and er-  
rant knights  
And ladies came, and by and by the  
town  
Flow'd in, and settling circled all the  
lists.  
And there they fixt the forks into the  
ground,  
And over these they placed a silver  
wand  
And over that a golden sparrow-hawk.  
Then Yniol's nephew, after trumpet  
blown,  
Spake to the lady with him and pro-  
claim'd.  
"Advance and take as fairest of the  
fair,

For I these two years past have won it  
 for thee,  
 The prize of beauty." Loudly spake  
 the Prince,  
 "Forbear: there is a worthier," and  
 the knight  
 With some surprise and thrice as much  
 disdain  
 Turn'd, and beheld the four, and all  
 his face  
 Glow'd like the heart of a great fire at  
 Yule,  
 So burnt he was with passion, crying out,  
 "Do battle for it then," no more; and  
 thrice  
 They clash'd together, and thrice they  
 brake their spears.  
 Then each, dishors'd and drawing,  
 lash'd at each  
 So often and with such blows, that all  
 the crowd  
 Wonder'd, and now and then from dis-  
 tant walls  
 There came a clapping as of phantom  
 hands.  
 So twice they fought, and twice they  
 breathed, and still  
 The dew of their great labor, and the  
 blood  
 Of their strong bodies, flowing, drain'd  
 their force.  
 But either's force was match'd till  
 Yniol's cry,  
 "Remember that great insult done the  
 Queen,"  
 Increased Geraint's, who heaved his  
 blade aloft,  
 And crack'd the helmet thro', and bit  
 the bone,  
 And fell'd him, and set foot upon his  
 breast,  
 And said, "Thy name?" To whom the  
 fallen man  
 Made answer, groaning, "Edyrn, son  
 of Nudd!  
 Ashamed am I that I should tell it  
 thee.  
 My pride is broken: men have seen my  
 fall."  
 "Then, Edyrn, son of Nudd," replied  
 Geraint,  
 "These two things shalt thou do, or  
 else thou diest.  
 First, thou thyself, thy lady, and thy  
 dwarf,  
 Shalt ride to Arthur's court, and being  
 there,  
 Crave pardon for that insult done the  
 Queen,  
 And shalt abide her judgment, on it;  
 next,  
 Thou shalt give back their earldom to  
 thy kin.  
 These two things shalt thou do, or thou  
 shalt die."  
 And Edyrn answer'd, "These things  
 will I do,  
 For I have never yet been overthrown,  
 And thou hast overthrown me, and my  
 pride

Is broken down, for Enid sees my fall!"  
 And rising up, he rode to Arthur's  
 court,  
 And there the Queen forgave him  
 easily.  
 And being young, he changed, and  
 came to loathe  
 His crime of traitor, slowly drew him-  
 self  
 Bright from his old dark life, and fell  
 at last  
 In the great battle fighting for the  
 king.

But when the third day from the  
 hunting-morn  
 Made a low splendor in the world, and  
 wings  
 Moved in her ivy, Enid, for she lay  
 With her fair head in the dim-yellow  
 light,  
 Among the dancing shadows of the  
 birds,  
 Woke and bethought her of her prom-  
 ise given  
 No later than last eve to Prince Ge-  
 raint—  
 So bent he seem'd on going the third  
 day,  
 He would not leave her, till her prom-  
 ise given—  
 To ride with him this morning to the  
 court,  
 And there be made known to the  
 stately Queen,  
 And there be wedded with all cere-  
 mony.  
 At this she cast her eyes upon her  
 dress,  
 And thought it never yet had look'd  
 so mean.  
 For as a leaf in mid-November is  
 To what it was in mid-October, seem'd  
 The dress that now she look'd on to  
 the dress  
 She look'd on ere the coming of Ge-  
 raint.  
 And still she look'd, and still the ter-  
 ror grew  
 Of that strange bright and dreadful  
 thing, a court,  
 All staring at her in her faded silk:  
 And softly to her own sweet heart she  
 said:

"This noble prince who won our  
 earldom back,  
 So splendid in his acts and his attire,  
 Sweet heaven, how much I shall dis-  
 credit him!  
 Would he could tarry with us here  
 awhile!  
 But being so beholden to the Prince,  
 It were but little grace in any of us,  
 Bent as he seem'd on going this third  
 day,  
 To seek a second favor at his hands.  
 Yet if he could but tarry a day or two,  
 Myself would work eye dim, and fin-  
 ger lame,

Far better than so much discredit  
him."

And Enid fell in longing for a dress  
All branch'd and flower'd with gold, a  
costly gift  
Of her good mother, given her on the  
night  
Before her birthday, three sad years  
ago,  
That night of fire, when Edyrn sack'd  
their house,  
And scatter'd all they had to all the  
winds:  
For while the mother show'd it, and  
the two  
Were turning and admiring it, the work  
To both appear'd so costly, rose a cry  
That Edyrn's men were 'on them, and  
they fled  
With little save the jewels they had on,  
Which being sold and sold had bought  
them bread:  
And Edyrn's men had caught them in  
their flight,  
And placed them in this ruin; and  
she wish'd  
The Prince had found her in her an-  
cient home;  
Then let her fancy flit across the past,  
And roam the goodly places that she  
knew;  
And last bethought her how she used  
to watch,  
Near that old home, a pool of golden  
carp;  
And one was patch'd and blurr'd and  
lustreless  
Among his burnish'd brethren of the  
pool;  
And half asleep she made comparison  
Of that and these to her own faded  
self  
And the gay court, and fell asleep  
again;  
And dreamt herself was such a faded  
form  
Among her burnish'd sisters of the  
pool;  
But this was in the garden of a king;  
And tho' she lay dark in the pool, she  
knew  
That all was bright; that all about  
were birds  
Of sunny plume in gilded trellis-  
work;  
That all the turf was rich in plots that  
look'd  
Each like a garnet or a turkis in it;  
And lords and ladies of the high court  
went  
In silver tissue talking things of state;  
And children of the king in cloth of  
gold  
Glanced at the doors or gambol'd down  
the walks;  
And while she thought "they will not  
see me," came  
A stately queen whose name was  
Guinevere,

And all the children in their cloth of  
gold  
Ran to her, crying, "if we have fish at  
all  
Let them be gold; and charge the gar-  
deners now  
To pick the faded creature from the  
pool,  
And cast it on the mixen that it die."  
And therewithal one came and seized  
on her,  
And Enid started waking, with her  
heart  
All overshadow'd by the foolish dream,  
And lo! it was her mother grasping  
her  
To get her well awake; and in her  
hand  
A suit of bright apparel, which she  
laid  
Flat on the couch, and spoke exult-  
ingly:

"See here, my child, how fresh the  
colors look,  
How fast they hold like colors of a  
shell  
That keeps the wear and polish of the  
wave.  
Why not? it never yet was worn, I  
trow:  
Look on it, child, and tell me if ye  
know it."

And Enid look'd, but all confused at  
first,  
Could scarce divide it from her foolish  
dream:  
Then suddenly she knew it and re-  
joiced,  
And answer'd, "Yea, I know it; your  
good gift,  
So sadly lost on that unhappy night;  
Your own good gift!" "Yea, surely,"  
said the dame,  
"And gladly given again this happy  
morn.  
For when the jousts were ended yes-  
terday,  
Went Yniol thro' the town, and every  
where  
He found the sack and plunder of our  
house  
All scatter'd thro' the houses of the  
town;  
And gave command that all which  
once was ours,  
Should now be ours again: and yester-  
eve,  
While you were talking sweetly with  
your Prince  
Came one with this and laid it in my  
hand,  
For love or fear, or seeking favor of us,  
Because we have our earldom back  
again.  
And yester-eve I would not tell you of  
it,  
But kept it for a sweet surprise at  
morn."

Yea, truly is it not a sweet surprise?  
 For I myself unwillingly have worn  
 My faded suit, as you, my child, have  
     yours,  
 And howsoever patient, Yniol his.  
 Ah, dear, he took me from a goodly  
     house,  
 With store of rich apparel, sumptuous  
     fare,  
 And page, and maid, and squire, and  
     seneschal,  
 And pastime both of hawk and hound,  
     and all  
 That appertains to noble maintenance.  
 Yea, and he brought me to a goodly  
     house;  
 But since our fortune slipt from sun to  
     shade,  
 And all thro' that young traitor, cruel  
     need  
 Constrain'd us, but a better time has  
     come;  
 So clothe yourself in this, that better  
     fits  
 Our mended fortunes and a Prince's  
     bride:  
 For tho' ye won the prize of fairest  
     fair,  
 And tho' I heard him call you fairest  
     fair,  
 Let never maiden think, however fair,  
 She is not fairer in new clothes than  
     old.  
 And should some great court-lady say,  
     the Prince  
 Hath pick'd a ragged robin from the  
     hedge,  
 And like a madman brought her to the  
     court,  
 Then were ye shamed, and, worse,  
     might shame the Prince  
 To whom we are beholden; but I  
     know,  
 When my dear child is set forth at her  
     best,  
 That neither court nor country, tho'  
     they sought  
 Thro' all the provinces like those of  
     old  
 That lighted on Queen Esther, has her  
     match."

Here ceased the kindly mother out  
     of breath;  
 And Enid listen'd brightening as she  
     lay;  
 Then, as the white and glittering star  
     of morn  
 Parts from a bank of snow, and by and  
     by  
 Slips into golden cloud, the maiden  
     rose,  
 And left her maiden couch, and robed  
     herself,  
 Help'd by the mother's careful hand  
     and eye,  
 Without a mirror, in the gorgeous  
     gown;  
 Who, after, turn'd her daughter round,  
     and said,

She never yet had seen her half so  
     fair;  
 And call'd her like that maiden in the  
     tale,  
 Whom Gwydion made by glamour out  
     of flowers,  
 And sweeter than the bride of Cassi-  
     velaun,  
 Flur, for whose love the Roman Caesar  
     first  
 Invaded Britain, ("but we beat him  
     back,  
 As this great prince invaded us, and  
     we,  
 Not beat him back, but welcomed him  
     with joy.  
 And I can scarcely ride with you to  
     court,  
 For old am I, and rough the ways and  
     wild;  
 But Yniol goes, and I full oft shall  
     dream  
 I see my princess as I see her now,  
 Clothed with my gift, and gay among  
     the gay."

But while the women thus rejoiced.  
     Geraint  
 Woke where he slept in the high hall,  
     and call'd  
 For Enid, and when Yniol made re-  
     port  
 Of that good mother making Enid gay  
 In such apparel as might well beseeem  
 His princess, or indeed the stately  
     queen,  
 He answer'd; "Earl, entreat her by  
     my love,  
 Albeit I give no reason but my wish,  
 That she ride with me in her faded  
     silk."  
 Yniol with that hard message went; it  
     fell,  
 Like flaws in summer laying lusty  
     corn:  
 For Enid all abash'd she knew not  
     why,  
 Dared not to glance at her good  
     mother's face,  
 But silently, in all obedience,  
 Her mother silent too, nor helping her,  
 Laid from her limbs the costly-broid-  
     er'd gift,  
 And robed them in her ancient suit  
     again,  
 And so descended. Never man re-  
     joiced  
 More than Geraint to greet her thus  
     attired;  
 And glancing all at once as keenly at  
     her,  
 As careful robins eye the delver's toil,  
 Made her cheek burn and either eye-  
     lid fall,  
 But rested with her sweet face satis-  
     fied;  
 Then seeing cloud upon the mother's  
     brow,  
 Her by both hands he caught, and  
     sweetly said,

"O my new mother, be not wroth or  
 grieved  
 At your new son, for my petition to  
 her.  
 When late I left Caerleon, our great  
 Queen,  
 In words whose echo lasts, they were  
 so sweet,  
 Made promise, that whatever bride I  
 brought,  
 Herself would clothe her like the sun  
 in Heaven.  
 Thereafter, when I reach'd this ruin'd  
 hold,  
 Beholding one so bright in dark estate,  
 I vow'd that could I gain her, our kind  
 Queen,  
 No hand but hers, should make your  
 Enid burst  
 Sunlike from cloud — and likewise  
 thought perhaps,  
 That service done so graciously would  
 bind  
 The two together ; for I wish the two  
 To love each other : how should Enid  
 find  
 A nobler friend ? Another thought I  
 had ;  
 I came among you here so suddenly,  
 That tho' her gentle presence at the  
 lists  
 Might well have served for proof that  
 I was loved,  
 I doubted whether filial tenderness,  
 Or easy nature, did not let itself  
 Be moulded by your wishes for her  
 weal ;  
 Or whether some false sense in her own  
 self  
 Of my contrasting brightness, over-  
 bore  
 Her fancy dwelling in this dusky hall ;  
 And such a sense might make her long  
 for court  
 And all its dangerous glories : and I  
 thought,  
 That could I somehow prove such force  
 in her  
 Link'd with such love for me, that at  
 a word  
 (No reason given her) she could cast  
 aside  
 A splendor dear to women, new to her,  
 And therefore dearer ; or if not so  
 new,  
 Yet therefore tenfold dearer by the  
 power  
 Of intermitted custom ; then I felt  
 That I could rest, a rock in ebbs and  
 flows,  
 Fixt on her faith. Now, therefore, I  
 do rest,  
 A prophet certain of my prophecy,  
 That never shadow of mistrust can  
 cross  
 Between us. Grant me pardon for my  
 thoughts :  
 And for my strange petition I will  
 make  
 Amends hereafter by some gaudy-day.

When your fair child shall wear your  
 costly gift  
 Beside your own warm hearth, with,  
 on her knees,  
 Who knows ? another gift of the high  
 God,  
 Which, maybe, shall have learn'd to  
 lisp you thanks."

He spoke : the mother smiled, but  
 half in tears,  
 Then brought a mantle down and  
 wrapt her in it,  
 And claspt and kiss'd her, and they  
 rode away.

Now thrice that morning Guinevere  
 had climb'd  
 The giant tower, from whose high  
 crest, they say,  
 Men saw the goodly hills of Somerset,  
 And white sails flying on the yellow  
 sea ;  
 But not to goodly hill or yellow sea  
 Look'd the fair Queen, but up the vale  
 of Usk,  
 By the flat meadow, till she saw them  
 come ;  
 And then descending met them at the  
 gates,  
 Embraced her with all welcome as a  
 friend,  
 And did her honor as the Prince's  
 bride,  
 And clothed her for her bridals like  
 the sun ;  
 And all that week was old Caerleon  
 gay,  
 For by the hands of Dubric, the high  
 saint,  
 They twain were wedded with all cere-  
 mony.

And this was on the last year's Whit-  
 suntide.  
 But Enid ever kept the faded silk,  
 Remembering how first he came on  
 her,  
 Drest in that dress, and how he loved  
 her in it,  
 And all her foolish fears about the  
 dress,  
 And all his journey toward her, as  
 himself  
 Had told her, and their coming to the  
 court.

And now this morning when he said  
 to her,  
 "Put on your worst and meanest  
 dress," she found  
 And took it, and array'd herself there-  
 in.

O purblind race of miserable men,  
 How many among us at this very hour  
 Do forge a life-long trouble for our  
 selves,  
 By taking true for false, or false for  
 true ;

Here, thro' the feeble twilight of this world  
Groping, how many, until we pass and reach  
That other, where we see as we are seen!

So fared it with Geraint, who issuing forth  
That morning, when they both had got to horse,  
Perhaps because he loved her passionately,  
And felt that tempest brooding round his heart,  
Which, if he spoke at all, would break perforce  
Upon a head so dear 'n thunder, said :  
"Not at my side. I charge you ride before,

Ever a good way on before; and this I charge you, on your duty as a wife,  
Whatever happens, not to speak to me,

No, not a word!" and Enid was aghast;  
And forth they rode, but scarce three paces on

When crying out "Effeminate as I am, I will not fight my way with gilded arms,

All shall be iron;" he loosed a mighty purse,  
Hung at his belt, and hurl'd it toward the squire.

So the last sight that Enid had of home Was all the marble threshold flashing, strown

With gold and scatter'd coinage, and the squire

Chafing his shoulder: then he cried again,

"To the wilds!" and Enid leading down the tracks

Thro' which he bade her lead him on, they past

The marches, and by bandit-haunted holds,

Gray swamps and pools, waste places of the hern

And wildernesses, perilous paths, they rode:

Round was their pace at first, but slacken'd soon:

A stranger meeting them had surely thought

They rode so slowly and they look'd so pale,

That each had suffer'd some exceeding wrong.

For he was ever saying to himself

"O I that wasted time to tend upon her,

To compass her with sweet observances,

To dress her beautifully and keep her true—"

And there he broke the sentence in his heart

Abruptly, as a man upon his tongue

May break it, when his passion masters him.

And she was ever praying the sweet heavens

To save her dear lord whole from any wound.

And ever in her mind she cast about

For that unnoticed failing in herself,

Which made him look so cloudy and so cold;

Till the great plover's human whistle amazed

Her heart, and glancing round the waste she fear'd

In every wavering brake an ambuscade.

Then thought again "if there be such in me,

I might amend it by the grace of heaven,

If he would only speak and tell me of it."

But when the fourth part of the day was gone,

Then Enid was aware of three tall knights

On horseback, wholly arm'd, behind a rock

In shadow, waiting for them, caitiffs all;

And heard one crying to his fellow,

"Look, Here comes a laggard hanging down his head,

Who seems no bolder than a beaten hound;

Come, we will slay him and will have his horse

And armor, and his damsel shall be ours."

Then Enid ponder'd in her heart, and said;

"I will go back a little to my lord,

And I will tell him all their caitiff talk;

For, be he wroth even to slaying me,

Far liefer by his dear hand had I die,

Than that my lord should suffer loss or shame."

Then she went back some paces of return,

Met his full frown timidly firm, and said:

"My lord, I saw three bandits by the rock

Waiting to fall on you, and heard them boast

That they would slay you, and possess your horse

And armor, and your damsel should be theirs."

He made a wrathful answer. "Did I wish

Your warning or your silence? one command

I laid upon you, not to speak to me, And thus you keep it! Well when,

look—for now,

Whether you wish me victory or defeat,  
Long for my life, or hunger for my death,  
Yourself shall see my vigor is not lost."

Then Enid waited pale and sorrowful,  
And down upon him bare the bandit three.  
And at the midmost charging, Prince Geraint  
Drove the long spear a cubit thro' his breast  
And out beyond ; and then against his brace  
Of comrades, each of whom had broken on him  
A lance that splinter'd like an icicle,  
Swung from his brand a windy buffet out  
Once, twice, to right, to left, and stunn'd the twain  
Or slew them, and dismounting like a man  
That skins the wild beast after slaying him,  
Strip'd from the three dead wolves of woman born  
The three gay suits of armor which they wore,  
And let the bodies lie, but bound the suits  
Of armor on their horses, each on each,  
And tied the bridle-reins of all the three  
Together, and said to her, "Drive them on  
Before you ;" and she drove them thro' the waste.

He follow'd nearer : ruth began to work  
Against his anger in him, while he watch'd  
The being he loved best in all the world,  
With difficulty in mild obedience  
Driving them on : he fain had spoken to her,  
And loosed in words of sudden fire the wrath  
And smoulder'd wrong that burnt him all within :  
But evermore it seem'd an easier thing  
At once without remorse to strike her dead,  
Than to cry "Halt," and to her own bright face  
Accuse her of the least immodesty :  
And thus tongue-tied, it made him wroth the more  
That she *could* speak whom his own ear had heard  
Call herself false : and suffering thus he made  
Minutes an age : but in scarce longer time  
Llan at Caerleon the full-tided Usk,  
Before he turn to fall seaward again,

Pauses, did Enid, keeping watch, behold  
In the first shallow shade of a deer wood,  
Before a gloom of stubborn-shafted oaks,  
Three other horsemen waiting, wholly arm'd,  
Whereof one seem'd far larger than her lord,  
And shook her pulses, crying, "Look, a prize !  
Three horses and three goodly suits of arms,  
And all in charge of whom ? a girl set on."  
"Nay" said the second, "yonder comes a knight."  
The third, "A craven ; how he hangs his head."  
The giant answer'd merrily, "Yea, but one ?  
Wait here, and when he passes fall upon him."

And Enid ponder'd in her heart and said,  
"I will abide the coming of my lord,  
And I will tell him all their villany.  
My lord is weary with the fight before,  
And they will fall upon him unawares.  
I needs must disobey him for his good ;  
How should I dare obey him to his harm ?  
Needs must I speak, and tho' he kill me for it,  
I save a life dearer to me than mine."

And she abode his coming, and said to him  
With timid firmness, "Have I leave to speak ?"  
He said, "Ye take it, speaking," and she spoke.

"There lurk three villains yonder in the wood,  
And each of them is wholly arm'd, and one  
Is larger-limb'd than you are, and they say  
That they will fall upon you while you pass."

To which he flung a wrathful answer back :  
"And if there were an hundred in the wood,  
And every man were larger-limb'd than I,  
And all at once should sally out upon me,  
I swear it would not ruffle me so much  
As you that not obey me. Stand aside,  
And if I fall, cleave to the better man."

And Enid stood aside to wait the event,  
Not dare to watch the combat, only breathe

Short fits of prayer, at every stroke a  
breath.  
And he, she dreaded most, bare down  
upon him.  
Aim'd at the helm, his lance err'd ; but  
Geraint's,  
A little in the late encounter strain'd,  
Struck thro' the bulky bandit's corse-  
let home,  
And then brake short, and down his  
enemy roll'd,  
And there lay still ; as he that tells the  
tale,  
Saw once a great piece of a promon-  
tory,  
That had a sapling growing on it, slip  
From the long shore-cliff's windy walls  
to the beach,  
And there lie still, and yet the sapling  
grew :  
So lay the man transfixt. His craven  
pair  
Of comrades, making slower at the  
Prince,  
When now they saw their bulwark fall-  
en, stood ;  
On whom the victor, to confound them  
more,  
Spurr'd with his terrible war-cry ; for  
as one,  
That listens near a torrent mountain-  
brook,  
All thro' the crash of the near cataract  
hears  
The drumming thunder of the huger  
fall  
At distance, were the soldiers wont to  
hear  
His voice in battle, and be kindled by  
it,  
And foeman scared, like that false pair  
who turn'd  
Flying, but, overtaken, died the death  
Themselves had wrought on many an  
innocent.

Thereon Geraint, dismounting, pick'd  
the lance  
That pleased him best, and drew from  
those dead wolves  
Their three gay suits of armor, each  
from each,  
And bound them on their horses, each  
on each,  
And tied the bridle-reins of all the  
three  
Together, and said to her, "Drive  
them on  
Before you," and she drove them thro'  
the wood.

He follow'd nearer still : the pain  
she had  
To keep them in the wild ways of the  
wood,  
Two sets of three laden with jingling  
arms,  
Together, served a little to disedge  
The sharpness of that pain about her  
heart :

And they themselves, like creatures  
gently born  
But into bad hands fall'n, and now so  
long  
By bandits groom'd, prick'd their light  
ears, and felt  
Her low firm voice and tender govern-  
ment.

So thro' the green gloom of the wood  
they past,  
And issuing under open heavens be-  
held

A little town with towers, upon a rock,  
And close beneath, a meadow gemlike  
chased

In the brown wild, and mowers mov-  
ing in it :

And down a rocky pathway from the  
place

There came a fair-hair'd youth, that in  
his hand

Bare victual for the mowers : and  
Geraint

Had ruth again on Enid looking pale :  
Then, moving downward to the mead-  
ow ground,

He, when the fair-hair'd youth came  
by him, said,

"Friend, let her eat ; the damsel is so  
faint."

"Yea, willingly," replied the youth ;  
"and you,

My lord, eat also, tho' the fare is coarse,  
And only meet for mowers ;" then set  
down

His basket, and dismounting on the  
sward

They let the horses graze, and ate  
themselves.

And Enid took a little delicately,  
Less having stomach for it than desire  
To close with her lord's pleasure ; but  
Geraint

Ate all the mowers' victual unawares,  
And when found all empty, was amazed ;  
And "Boy," said he, "I have eaten  
all, but take

A horse and arms for guerdon ; choose  
the best."

He, reddening in extremity of delight,  
"My lord, you overpay me fifty-fold."

"Ye will be all the wealthier," cried  
the Prince.

"I take it as free gift, then," said the  
boy,

"Not guerdon ; for myself can easily,  
While your good damsel rests, return,  
and fetch

Fresh victual for these mowers of our  
Earl ;

For these are his, and all the field is  
his,

And I myself am his ; and I will tell  
him

How great a man you are : he loves to  
know

When men of mark are in his terri-  
tory : [here,

And he will have you to his palace

And serve you costlier than with mowers' fare."

Then said Geraint, "I wish no better fare:  
I never ate with angrier appetite  
Than when I left your mowers dinnerless,  
And into no Earl's palace will I go.  
I know, God knows, too much of palaces!  
And if he want me, let him come to me.  
But hire us some fair chamber for the night,  
And stalling for the horses, and return  
With victual for these men, and let us know."

"Yea, my kind lord," said the glad youth, and went,  
Held his head high, and thought himself a knight,  
And up the rocky pathway disappear'd,  
Leading the horse, and they were left alone.

But when the Prince had brought his errant eyes  
Home from the rock, sideways he let them glance  
At Enid, where she droopt: his own false doom,  
That shadow of mistrust should never cross  
Betwixt them, came upon him, and he sigh'd;  
Then with another humorous ruth remark'd  
The lusty mowers laboring dinnerless,  
And watch'd the sun blaze on the turning scythe,  
And after nodded sleepily in the heat.  
But she, remembering her old ruin'd hall,  
And all the windy clamor of the daws  
About her hollow turret, pluck'd the grass  
There growing longest by the meadow's edge,  
And into many a listless annulet,  
Now over, now beneath her marriage ring,  
Wove and unwove it, till the boy return'd  
And told them of a chamber, and they went;  
Where, after saying to her, "If ye will,  
Call for the woman of the house," to which  
She answer'd, "Thanks, my lord;" the two remain'd  
Apart by all the chamber's width, and mute  
As creatures voiceless thro' the fault of birth,  
Or two wild men supporters of a shield.  
Painted, who stare at open space, nor glance  
The one at other, parted by the shield.

On a sudden, many a voice along the street,  
And heel against the pavement echoing, burst  
Their drowse; and either started while the door,  
Push'd from without, drave backward to the wall,  
And midstmost of a rout of roisterers,  
Femininely fair and dissolutely pale,  
Her suitor in old years before Geraint,  
Enter'd, the wild lord of the place, Limours.  
He moving up with pliant courtliness,  
Greeted Geraint full face, but stealthily,  
In the mid-warmth of welcome and graspt hand,  
Found Enid with the corner of his eye,  
And knew her sitting sad and solitary.  
Then cried Geraint for wine and goodly cheer  
To feed the sudden guest, and sumptuously  
According to his fashion, bade the host  
Call in what men soever were his friends,  
And feast with these in honor of their earl;  
"And care not for the cost; the cost is mine."

And wine and food were brought, and Earl Limours  
Drank till he jested with all ease, and told  
Free tales, and took the word and play'd upon it,  
And made it of two colors; for his talk,  
When wine and free companions kindled him,  
Was wont to glance and sparkle like a gem  
Of fifty facets; thus he moved the Prince  
To laughter and his comrades to applause,  
Then, when the Prince was merry, ask'd Limours,  
"Your leave, my lord, to cross the room, and speak  
To your good damsel there who sits apart,  
And seems so lonely?" "My free leave" he said;  
"Get her to speak: she does not speak to me."  
Then rose Limours and looking at his feet,  
Like him who tries the bridge he fears may fail,  
Crost and came near, lifted adoring eyes,  
Bow'd at her side and utter'd whisperingly:

"Enid, the pilot star of my lone life,  
Enid my early and my only love,  
Enid the loss of whom has turn'd me wild—

What chance is this? how is it I see you here?  
 You are in my power at last, are in my power.  
 Yet fear me not: I call mine own self wild,  
 But keep a touch of sweet civility  
 Here in the heart of waste and wilderness.  
 I thought, but that your father came between,  
 In former days you saw me favorably.  
 And if it were so do not keep it back:  
 Make me a little happier: let me know it:  
 Owe you me nothing for a life half-lost?  
 Yea, yea, the whole dear debt of all you are.  
 And, Enid, you and he, I see it with joy—  
 You sit apart, you do not speak to him,  
 You come with no attendance, page or maid,  
 To serve you—does he love you as of old?  
 For, call it lovers' quarrels, yet I know  
 Tho' men may bicker with the things they love,  
 They would not make them laughable in all eyes.  
 Not while they loved them; and your wretched dress,  
 A wretched insult on you, dumbly speaks  
 Your story, that this man loves you no more.  
 Your beauty is no beauty to him now:  
 A common chance—right well I know it—pall'd—  
 For I know men: nor will ye win him back,  
 For the man's love once gone never returns.  
 But here is one who loves you as of old;  
 With more exceeding passion than of old:  
 Good, speak the word: my followers ring him round:  
 He sits unarm'd; I hold a finger up;  
 They understand: no; I do not mean blood:  
 Nor need you look so scared at what I say:  
 My malice is no deeper than a moat,  
 No stronger than a wall: there is the keep;  
 He shall not cross us more; speak but the word:  
 Or speak it not; but then by Him that made me  
 The one true lover which you ever had,  
 I will make use of all the power I have.  
 O pardon me! the madness of that hour,  
 When first I parted from you, moves me yet.”  
 At this the tender sound of his own voice

And sweet self-pity, or the fancy of it,  
 Made his eye moist; but Enid fear'd his eyes,  
 Moist as they were, wine-heated from the feast;  
 And answer'd with such craft as women use,  
 Guilty or guiltless, to stave off a chance  
 That breaks upon them perilously, and said:

“Earl, if you love me as in former years,  
 And do not practise on me, come with morn,  
 And snatch me from him as by violence;  
 Leave me to-night: I am weary to the death.”

Low at leave-taking, with his brandish'd plume  
 Brushing his instep, bow'd the all-amorous Earl,  
 And the stout Prince bade him a loud good-night.  
 He moving homeward babbled to his men,  
 How Enid never loved a man but him,  
 Nor cared a broken egg-shell for her lord.

But Enid left alone with Prince Geraint,  
 Debating his command of silence given,  
 And that she now perforce must violate it,  
 Held commune with herself, and while she held  
 He fell asleep, and Enid had no heart  
 To wake him, but hung o'er him, wholly pleased  
 To find him yet unwounded after fight,  
 And hear him breathing low and equally.  
 Anon she rose, and stepping lightly, heap'd  
 The pieces of his armor in one place,  
 All to be there against a sudden need;  
 Then dozed awhile herself, but over-tail'd  
 By that day's grief and travel, evermore  
 Seem'd catching at a rootless thorn, and then  
 Went slipping down horrible precipices,  
 And strongly striking out her limbs awoke;  
 Then thought she heard the wild Earl at the door,  
 With all his rout of random followers,  
 Sound on a dreadful trumpet, summoning her;  
 Which was the red cock shouting to the light,  
 As the gray dawn stole o'er the dewy world,  
 And glimmer'd on his armor in the room.  
 And once again she rose to look at it,

But touch'd it unawares : jangling, the  
cas he  
 Fell, and he started up and stared at  
 her.  
 Then breaking his command of silence  
 given,  
 She told him all that Earl Limours had  
 said,  
 Except the passage that he loved her  
 not ;  
 Nor left untold the craft herself had  
 used ;  
 But ended with apology so sweet,  
 Low-spoken, and of so few words, and  
 seem'd  
 So justified by that necessity,  
 That tho' he thought "was it for him  
 she wept  
 In Devon?" he but gave a wrathful  
 groan,  
 Saying "your sweet faces make good  
 fellows fools  
 And traitors. Call the host and bid  
 him bring  
 Charger and palfrey." So she glided  
 out  
 Among the heavy breathings of the  
 house,  
 And like a household Spirit at the  
 walls  
 Beat, till she woke the sleepers, and  
 return'd :  
 Then tending her rough lord, tho' all  
 unask'd,  
 In silence, did him service as a squire ;  
 Till issuing arm'd he found the host  
 and cried,  
 "Thy reckoning, friend?" and ere he  
 learnt it, "Take  
 Five horses and their armors;" and  
 the host,  
 Suddenly honest, answer'd in amaze,  
 "My lord, I scarce have spent the  
 worth of one!"  
 "Ye will be all the wealthier," said  
 the Prince,  
 And then to Enid, "Forward! and to-  
 day  
 I charge you, Enid, more especially,  
 What thing soever ye may hear, or see,  
 Or fancy (tho' I count it of small use  
 To charge you) that ye speak not but  
 obey."

And Enid answer'd, "Yea, my lord,  
 I know  
 Your wish, and would obey; but riding  
 first,  
 I hear the violent threats you do not  
 hear,  
 I see the danger which you cannot see:  
 Then not to give you warning, that  
 seems hard;  
 Almost beyond me: yet I would obey."

"Yea so," said he, "do it: be not  
 too wise;  
 Seeing that ye are wedded to a man,  
 Not quite mismated with a yawning  
 clown.

But one with arms to guard his head  
 and yours,  
 With eyes to find you out however far,  
 And ears to hear you even in his  
 dreams."

With that he turn'd and look'd as  
 keenly at her  
 As careful robins eye the delver's toil;  
 And that within her, which a wanton  
 fool,  
 Or hasty judger would have call'd her  
 guilt,  
 Made her cheek burn and either eye-  
 lid fall.  
 And Geraint look'd and was not satis-  
 fied.

Then forward by a way which, beaten  
 broad,  
 Led from the territory of false Limours  
 To the waste earldom of another earl,  
 Doorm, whom his shaking vassals call'd  
 the Bull,  
 Went Enid with her sullen follower on.  
 Once she look'd back, and when she  
 saw him ride  
 More near by many a rood than yester-  
 morn,  
 It wellnigh made her cheerful; till Ge-  
 raint  
 Waving an angry hand as who should  
 say  
 "Ye watch me," sadden'd all her heart  
 again.  
 But while the sun yet beat a dewy  
 blade,  
 The sound of many a heavily-galloping  
 hoof  
 Smote on her ear, and turning round  
 she saw  
 Dust, and the points of lances bicker  
 in it.  
 Then not to disobey her lord's behest,  
 And yet to give him warning, for he  
 rode  
 As if he heard not, moving back she  
 held  
 Her finger up, and pointed to the dust.  
 At which the warrior in his obstinacy,  
 Because she kept the letter of his  
 word  
 Was in a manner pleased, and turning,  
 stood.  
 And in the moment after, wild Li-  
 mours,  
 Borne on a black horse, like a thun-  
 der-cloud  
 Whose skirts are loosen'd by the break-  
 ing storm,  
 Half ridden off with by the thing he  
 rode,  
 And all in passion uttering a dry  
 shriek,  
 Dash'd on Geraint, who closed with  
 him, and bore  
 Down by the length of lance and arm  
 beyond  
 The crupper, and so left him stunn'd  
 or dead,

And overthrew the next that followed him,  
And blindly rush'd on all the rout behind.

But at the flash and motion of the man  
They vanish'd panic-stricken, like a shoal

Of darting fish, that on a summer morn  
Adown the crystal dykes at Camelot  
Come slipping o'er their shadows on the sand,

But if a man who stands upon the brink  
But lift a shining hand against the sun,  
There is not left the twinkle of a fin  
Betwixt the cressy islets white in flower,

So, scared but at the motion of the man,  
Fled all the boon companions of the Earl,

And left him lying in the public way;  
So vanish friendships only made in wine.

Then like a stormy sunlight smiled  
Geraint,

Who saw the chargers of the two that fell

Start from their fallen lords, and wildly fly,

Mixt with the fliers. "Horse and man," he said,

"All of one mind and all right honest friends!

Not a hoof left: and I methinks till now

Was honest — paid with horses and with arms;

I cannot steal or plunder, nor nor beg:  
And so what say ye, shall we strip him there

Your lover? has your palfrey heart enough

To bear his armor? shall we fast or dine?

No? — then do you, being right honest, pray

That we may meet the horsemen of Earl Doorm,

I too would still be honest." Thus he said:

And sadly gazing on her bridle-reins,  
And answering not one word, she led the way.

But as a man to whom a dreadful loss

Falls in a far land and he knows it not,  
But coming back he learns it, and the loss

So pains him that he sickens nigh to death;

So fared it with Geraint, who being prick'd

In combat with the followers of Li-mours,

Bled underneath his armor secretly,  
And so rode on, nor told his gentle wife

What ail'd him, hardly knowing it himself,

Till his eye darken'd and his helmet wagg'd;

And at a sudden swerving of the road,  
Tho' happily down on a bank of grass,  
The Prince, without a word, from his horse fell.

And Enid heard the crashing of his fall,

Suddenly came, and at his side all pale  
Dismounting, loosed the fastenings of his arms,

Nor let her true hand falter, nor blue eye

Moisten, till she had lighted on his wound,

And tearing off her veil of faded silk  
Had bared her forehead to the blistering sun,

And swathed the hurt that drain'd her dear lord's life.

Then after all was done that hand could do,

She rested, and her desolation came  
Upon her, and she wept beside the way.

And many past, but none regarded her,

For in that realm of lawless turbulence,

A woman weeping for her murder'd mate

Was cared as much for as a summer shower:

One took him for a victim of Earl Doorm,

Nor dared to waste a perilous pity on him:

Another hurrying past, a man-at-arms  
Rode on a mission to the bandit Earl;

Half whistling and half singing a coarse song,

He drove the dust against her veiled eyes.

Another, flying from the wrath of Doorm

Before an ever-fancied arrow, made  
The long way smoke beneath him in his fear;

At which her palfrey whinnying lifted heel,

And scour'd into the coppices and was lost,

While the great charger stood, grieved like a man.

But at the point of noon the huge Earl Doorm,

Broad-faced with under-fringe of rus-set beard,

Bound on a foray, rolling eyes of prey,  
Came riding with a hundred lances up;

But ere he came, like one that hails a ship,

Cried out with a big voice, "What, is he dead?"

"No, no, not dead!" she answered in all haste.

"Would some of your kind people take him up,

And bear him hence out of this cruel  
sun :  
Most sure am I, quite sure, he is not  
dead."

Then said Earl Doorm ; " Well if he  
be not dead,  
Why wail ye for him thus ? ye seem a  
child.

And be he dead, I count you for a fool ;  
Your wailing will not quicken him :  
dead or not,

Ye mar a comely face with idiot tears.  
Yet, since the face is comely—some of  
you,

Here, take him up, and bear him to  
our hall :

An if he live, we will have him of our  
band ;

And if he die, why earth has earth  
enough

To hide him. See ye take the charger  
too,

A noble one."

He spake, and past away,  
But left two brawny spearmen, who  
advanced,

Each growling like a dog, when his  
good bone

Seems to be pluck'd at by the village  
boys

Who love to vex him eating, and he  
fears

To lose his bone, and lays his foot  
upon it,

Gnawing and growling : so the ruffians  
growld,

Fearing to lose, and all for a dead man,  
Their chance of booty from the morn-  
ing's raid ;

Yet raised and laid him on a litter-  
bier,

Such as they brought upon their fo-  
rays out

For those that might be wounded ; laid  
him on it

All in the hollow of his shield, and  
took

And bore him to the naked hall of  
Doorm,

His gentle charger following him un-  
led)

And cast him and the bier in which he  
lay

Down on an oaken settle in the hall,  
And then departed, hot in haste to join

Their luckier mates, but growling as  
before,

And cursing their lost time, and the  
dead man,

And their own Earl, and their own  
souls, and her.

They might as well have blest her : she  
was deaf

To blessing and to cursing save from  
one.

So for long hours sat Enid by her  
lord,

There in the naked hall, propping his  
head,

And chafing his pale hands, and call-  
ing to him.

And at the last he waken'd from his  
swoon,

And found his own dear bride propping  
his head,

And chafing his faint hands, and call-  
ing to him ;

And felt the warm tears falling on his  
face ;

And said to his own heart, " she weeps  
for me : "

And yet lay still, and feign'd himself  
as dead,

That he might prove her to the utter-  
most,

And say to his own heart " she weeps  
for me. "

But in the falling afternoon return'd  
The huge Earl Doorm with plunder to  
the hall.

His lusty spearmen follow'd him with  
noise :

Each hurling down a heap of things  
that rang

Against the pavement, cast his lance  
aside,

And doff'd his helm : and then there  
flutter'd in,

Half-bold, half-frighted, with dilated  
eyes,

A tribe of women, dress'd in many  
hues,

And mingled with the spearmen : and  
Earl Doorm

Struck with a knife's haft hard against  
the board.

And call'd for flesh and wine to feed  
his spears.

And men brought in whole hogs and  
quarter beeves,

And all the hall was dim with steam of  
flesh :

And none spake word, but all sat down  
at once,

And ate with tumult in the naked  
hall,

Feeding like horses when you hear  
them feed ;

Till Enid shrank far back into herself,  
To shun the wild ways of the lawless

tribe.

But when Earl Doorm had eaten all he  
would,

He roll'd his eyes about the hall, and  
found

A damsel drooping in a corner of it.  
Then he remember'd her, and how she

wept ;

And out of her there came a power  
upon him ;

And rising on a sudden, he said, " Eat !  
I never yet beheld a thing so pale.

God's curse, it makes me mad to see  
you weep.

Eat ! Look yourself. Good luck had  
your good man,

For were I dead who is it would weep  
for me ?

Sweet lady, never since I first drew  
 breath,  
 Have I beheld a lily like yourself.  
 And so there lived some color in your  
 cheek,  
 There is not one among my gentle-  
 women  
 Were fit to wear your slipper for a  
 glove.  
 But listen to me, and by me be ruled,  
 And I will do the thing I have not  
 done,  
 For you shall share my earldom with  
 me, girl,  
 And we will live like two birds in one  
 nest,  
 And I will fetch you forage from all  
 fields,  
 For I compel all creatures to my will."

He spoke : the brawny spearman let  
 his cheek  
 Bulge with the unswallow'd piece, and  
 turning stared ;  
 While some, whose souls the old ser-  
 pent long had drawn  
 Down, as the worm draws in the  
 wither'd leaf,  
 And makes it earth, hiss'd each at  
 other's ear  
 What shall not be recorded — women  
 they,  
 Women, or what had been those gra-  
 cious things,  
 But now desired the humbling of their  
 best,  
 Yea, would have help'd him to it : and  
 all at once  
 They hated her, who took no thought  
 of them,  
 But answer'd in low voice, her meek  
 head yet  
 Drooping, "I pray you of your cour-  
 tesy,  
 He being as he is, to let me be."

She spake so low he hardly heard her  
 speak,  
 But like a mighty patron, satisfied  
 With what himself had done so gra-  
 ciously,  
 Assumed that she had thanked him,  
 adding, "yea,  
 Eat and be glad, for I account you  
 mine."

She answer'd meekly, "How should  
 I be glad  
 Henceforth in all the world at any-  
 thing,  
 Until my lord arise and look upon  
 me ?"

Here the huge Earl cried out upon  
 her talk,  
 As all but empty heart and weariness  
 And sickly nothing ; suddenly seized  
 on her,  
 And bare her by main violence to the  
 board,  
 And thrust the dish before her, crying,  
 "Eat."

"No, no," said Enid, vext, "I will  
 not eat,  
 Till yonder man upon the bier arise,  
 And eat with me." "Drink, then," he  
 answer'd. "Here !"  
 (And fill'd a horn with wine and held  
 it to her),  
 "Lo ! I, myself, when flush'd with  
 fight, or hot,  
 God's curse, with anger — often I my-  
 self,  
 Before I well have drunken, scarce can  
 eat :  
 Drink therefore and the wine will  
 change your will."

"Not so," she cried, "by Heaven, I  
 will not drink,  
 Till my dear lord arise and bid me do  
 it,  
 And drink with me ; and if he rise no  
 more,  
 I will not look at wine until I die."

At this he turn'd all red and paced  
 his hall,  
 Now gnaw'd his under, now his upper  
 lip,  
 And coming up close to her, said at  
 last ;  
 "Girl, for I see you scorn my courte-  
 sies,  
 Take warning : yonder man is surely  
 dead ;  
 And I compel all creatures to my will.  
 Not eat nor drink ? And wherefore  
 wait for one,  
 Who put your beauty to this flout and  
 scorn  
 By dressing it in rags ? Amazed am I,  
 Beholding how ye butt against my wish,  
 That I forbear you thus : cross me no  
 more.  
 At least put off to please me this poor  
 gown,  
 This silken rag, this beggar-woman's  
 weed :  
 I love that beauty should go beauti-  
 fully :  
 For see ye not my gentlewomen here,  
 How gay, how suited to the house of  
 one,  
 Who loves that beauty should go beau-  
 tifully !  
 Rise therefore ; robe yourself in this :  
 obey."

He spoke, and one among his gentle-  
 women  
 Display'd a splendid silk of foreign  
 loom,  
 Where like a shoaling sea the lovely  
 blue  
 Play'd into green, and thicker down  
 the front  
 With jewels than the sward with drops  
 of dew,  
 When all night long a cloud clings to  
 the hill,  
 And with the dawn ascending lets the  
 day

Strike where it clung : so thickly shone  
the gems.

But Enid answer'd, harder to be  
moved  
Than hardest tyrants in their day of  
power,  
With life-long injuries burning una-  
venged,  
And now their hour has come ; and  
Enid said :

" In this poor gown my dear lord  
found me first,  
And loved me serving in my father's  
hall :

In this poor gown I rode with him to  
court,  
And there the Queen array'd me like  
the sun :

In this poor gown he bade me clothe  
myself,

When now we rode upon this fatal  
quest

Of honor, where no honor can be  
gain'd :

And this poor gown I will not cast  
aside

Until himself arise a living man,  
And bid me cast it. I have griefs  
enough :

Pray you be gentle, pray you let me be :  
I never loved, can never love but him :  
Yea, God, I pray you of your gentle-  
ness,

He being as he is, to let me be."

Then strode the brute Earl up and  
down his hall,

And took his russet beard between his  
teeth ;

Last, coming up quite close, and in his  
mood

Crying, " I count it of no more avail,  
Dame, to be gentle than ungentle with  
you ;

Take my salute," unknighly with flat  
hand,

However lightly, smote her on the  
check.

Then Enid, in her utter helples-  
ness,

And since she thought, " he had not  
dared to do it,

Except he surely knew my lord was  
dead,"

Sent forth a sudden sharp and bitter  
cry,

As of a wild thing taken in the trap,  
Which sees the trapper coming thro'  
the wood.

This heard Geraint, and grasping at  
his sword,

(It lay beside him in the hollow shield,)   
Made but a single bound, and with a  
sweep of it

Shore thro' the swarthy neck, and like  
a ball

The russet-bearded head roll'd on the  
floor.

So died Earl Doorm by him he counted  
dead.

And all the men and women in the hall  
Rose when they saw the dead man rise,  
and fled

Yelling as from a spectre, and the two  
Were left alone together, and he said :

" Enid, I have used you worse than  
that dead man ;

Done you more wrong : we both have  
undergone

That trouble which has left me thrice  
your own :

Henceforward I will rather die than  
doubt.

And here I lay this penance on myself,  
Not, tho' mine own ears heard you  
yester-morn—

You thought me sleeping, but I heard  
you say,

I heard you say, that you were no true  
wife :

I swear I will not ask your meaning in  
it :

I do believe yourself against yourself,  
And will henceforward rather die than  
doubt."

And Enid could not say one tender  
word,

She felt so blunt and stupid at the  
heart :

She only prayed him, " Fly, they will  
return

And slay you : fly, your charger is  
without,

My palfry lost." " Then, Enid, shall  
you ride

Behind me." " Yea," said Enid, " let  
us go."

And moving out they found the stately  
horse,

Who now no more a vassal to the thief,  
But free to stretch its limbs in lawful  
fight,

Neigh'd with all gladness as they came,  
and stoop'd

With a low whinny toward the pair :  
and she

Kiss'd the white star upon his noble  
front,

Glad also ; then Geraint upon the horse  
Mounted, and reach'd a hand, and on  
his foot

She set her own and climb'd ; he turn'd  
his face

And kiss'd her climbing, and she cast  
her arms

About him, and at once they rode  
away.

And never yet, since high in Para-  
dise

O'er the four rivers the first roses blew,  
Came purer pleasure unto mortal kind  
Than lived thro' her, who in that per-  
ilous hour

Put hand to hand beneath her hus-  
band's heart,

And felt him hers again : she did not weep,  
 But o'er her meek eyes came a happy mist  
 Like that which kept the heart of Eden green  
 Before the useful trouble of the rain :  
 Yet not so misty were her meek blue eyes  
 As not to see before them on the path,  
 Right in the gateway of the bandit hold,  
 A knight of Arthur's court, who laid his lance  
 In rest, and made as if to fall upon him.  
 Then, fearing for his hurt and loss of blood,  
 She, with her mind all full of what had chanced,  
 Shriek'd to the stranger, "Slay not a dead man!"  
 "The voice of Enid," said the knight; but she,  
 Beholding it was Edyrn, son of Nudd,  
 Was moved so much the more, and shriek'd again,  
 "O cousin, slay not him who gave you life."  
 And Edyrn moving frankly forward spake :  
 "My lord Geraint, I greet you with all love;  
 I took you for a bandit knight of Doorn;  
 And fear not, Enid, I should fall upon him,  
 Who love you, Prince, with something of the love  
 Wherewith we love the Heaven that chastens us.  
 For once, when I was up so high in pride  
 That I was halfway down the slope to Hell,  
 By overthrowing me you threw me higher.  
 Now, made a knight of Arthur's Table Round,  
 And since I knew this Earl, when I myself  
 Was half a bandit in my lawless hour,  
 I come the mouthpiece of our King to Doorn  
 (The King is close behind me) bidding him  
 Disband himself, and scatter all his powers,  
 Submit, and hear the judgment of the King."

"He hears the judgment of the King of Kings,"  
 Cried the wan Prince; "And lo the powers of Doorn  
 Are scatter'd," and he pointed to the field,  
 Where, huddled here and there on mound and knoll,  
 Were men and women staring and aghast,

While some yet fled; and then he plainlier told  
 How the huge Earl lay slain within his hall.  
 But when the knight besought him,  
 "Follow me,  
 Prince, to the camp, and in the King's own ear  
 Speak what has chanced; ye surely have endured  
 Strange chances here alone;" that other flush'd,  
 And hung his head, and halted in reply,  
 Fearing the mild face of the blameless King,  
 And after madness acted question ask'd :  
 Till Edyrn crying, "If ye will not go  
 To Arthur, then will Arthur come to you,"  
 "Enough," he said, "I follow," and they went,  
 But Enid in their going had two fears,  
 One from the bandit scatter'd in the field,  
 And one from Edyrn. Every now and then,  
 When Edyrn rein'd his charger at her side,  
 She shrank a little. In a hollow land,  
 From which old fires have broken, men may fear  
 Fresh fire and ruin. He, perceiving, said :

"Fair and dear cousin, you that most had cause  
 To fear me, fear no longer, I am changed.  
 Yourself were first the blameless cause to make  
 My nature's prideful sparkle in the blood  
 Break into furious flame; being repulsed  
 By Yniol and yourself, I schemed and wrought  
 Until I overturn'd him; then set up  
 (With one main purpose ever at my heart)  
 My haughty jousts, and took a paramour;  
 Did her mock-honor as the fairest fair,  
 And, toppling over all antagonism,  
 So wax'd in pride, that I believed myself  
 Unconquerable, for I was wellnigh mad;  
 And, but for my main purpose in these jousts,  
 I should have slain your father, seized yourself.  
 I lived in hope that sometime you would come  
 To these my lists with him whom best you loved;  
 And there, poor cousin, with your meek blue eyes,

The truest eyes that ever answer'd  
heaven,

Behold me overturn and trample on  
him.

Then, had you cried, or knelt, or pray'd  
to me,

I should not less have kill'd him. And  
you came,—

But once you came,—and with your  
own true eyes

Beheld the man you loved (I speak as  
one

Speaks of a service done him) over-  
throw

My proud self, and my purpose three  
years old,

And set his foot upon me, and give me  
life.

There was I broken down; there was I  
saved;

Tho' thence I rode all-shamed, hating  
the life

He gave me, meaning to be rid of it.  
And all the penance the Queen laid

upon me  
Was but to rest awhile within her  
court;

Where first as sullen as a beast new-  
caged,

And waiting to be treated like a wolf,  
Because I knew my deeds were known,

I found,  
Instead of scornful pity or pure scorn,

Such fine reserve and noble reticence,  
Manners so kind, yet stately, such a

grace  
Of tenderest courtesy, that I began

To glance behind me at my former life,  
And find that it had been the wolf's

indeed:  
And oft I talk'd with Dubric, the high

saint,  
Who, with mild heat of holy oratory,

Subdued me somewhat to that gentle-  
ness,

Which, when it weds with manhood,  
makes a man.

And you were often there about the  
Queen,

But saw me not, or mark'd not if you  
saw;

Nor did I care or dare to speak with  
you,

But kept myself aloof till I was  
changed;

And fear not, cousin; I am changed  
indeed."

He spoke, and Enid easily believed,  
Like simple noble natures, credulous

Of what they long for, good in friend  
or foe,

There most in those who most have  
done them ill.

And when they reach'd the camp the  
King himself

Advanced to greet them, and behold-  
ing her

Tho' pale, yet happy, ask'd her not a  
word,

But went apart with Edyrn, whom he  
held

In converse for a little, and return'd,  
And, gravely smiling, lifted her from

horse,  
And kiss'd her with all pureness,  
brother-like,

And show'd an empty tent allotted  
her,

And glancing for a minute, till he saw  
her

Pass into it, turn'd to the Prince, and  
said:

"Prince, when of late ye pray'd me  
for my leave

To move to your own land and there  
defend

Your marches, I was prick'd with some  
reproof,

As one that let foul wrong stagnate  
and be,

By having look'd too much thro' alien  
eyes,

And wrought too long with delegated  
hands,

Not used mine own: but now behold  
me come

To cleanse this common sewer of all  
my realm,

With Edyrn and with others: have ye  
look'd

At Edyrn? have ye seen how nobly  
changed?

This work of his is great and wonder-  
ful.

His very face with change of heart is  
changed.

The world will not believe a man re-  
pents:

And this wise world of ours is mainly  
right.

Full seldom *does* a man repent, or use  
Both grace and will to pick the vicious

quitch  
Of blood and custom wholly out of  
him,

And make all clean, and plant himself  
afresh.

Edyrn has done it, weeding all his heart  
As I will weed this land before I go.

I, therefore, made him of our Table  
Round,

Not rashly, but have proved him every-  
way

One of our noblest, our most valorous,  
Sanest and most obedient: and indeed

This work of Edyrn wrought upon  
himself

After a life of violence, seems to me  
A thousand-fold more great and won-  
ful

Then if some knight of mine, risking  
his life,

My subject with my subjects under  
him,

Should make an onslaught single on a  
realm

Of robbers, tho' he slew them one by  
one

And were himself nigh wounded to the death."

So spake the King; low bow'd the Prince, and felt His work was neither great nor wonderful, And past to Enid's tent; and thither came The King's own leech to look into his hurt; And Enid tended on him there; and there Her constant motion round him, and the breath Of her sweet tendance hovering over him, Fill'd all the genial courses of his blood With deeper and with ever deeper love, As the south-west that blowing Bala lake Fills all the sacred Dee. So past the days.

But while Geraint lay healing of his hurt, The blameless King went forth and cast his eyes On each of all whom Uther left in charge Long since, to guard the justice of the King: He look'd and found them wanting; and as now Men weed the white horse on the Berkshire hills To keep him bright and clean as heretofore, He rooted out the slothful officer Or guilty, which for bribe had wink'd at wrong, And in their chairs set up a stronger race With hearts and hands, and sent a thousand men To till the wastes, and moving everywhere Clear'd the dark places and let in the law, And broke the bandit holds and cleansed the land.

Then, when Geraint was whole again, they past With Arthur to Caerleon upon Usk. There the great Queen once more embraced her friend, And clothed her in apparel like the day. And tho' Geraint could never take again That comfort from their converse which he took Before the Queen's fair name was breathed upon, He rested well content that all was well. Thence after tarrying for a space they rode,

And fifty knights rode with them to the shores Of Severn, and they past to their own land. And there he kept the justice of the King So vigorously yet mildly, that all hearts Applauded, and the spiteful whisper died: And being ever foremost in the chase, And victor at the tilt and tournament, They call'd him the great Prince and man of men. But Enid, whom her ladies loved to call Enid the Fair, a grateful people named Enid the Good; and in their halls arose The cry of children, Enids and Geraints Of times to be; nor did he doubt her more But rested in her fealty, till he crown'd A happy life with a fair death, and fell Against the heathen of the Northern Sea In battle, fighting for the blameless King.

#### MERLIN AND VIVIEN.

A STORM was coming, but the winds were still, And in the wild woods of Broceliande, Before an oak, so hollow huge and old It look'd a tower of ruin'd masonwork, At Merlin's feet the wily Vivien lay.

The wily Vivien stole from Arthur's court: She hated all the knights, and heard in thought Their lavish comment when her name was named. For once, when Arthur walking all alone, Vext at a rumor rife about the Queen, Had met her, Vivien, being greeted fair, Would fain have wrought upon his cloudy mood With reverent eyes mock-loyal, shaken voice, And flutter'd adoration, and at last With dark sweet hints of some who prized him more Than who should prize him most; at which the King Had gazed upon her blankly and gone by: But one had watch'd, and had not held his peace: It made the laughter of one afternoon That Vivien should attempt the blameless King. And after that, she set herself to gain Him, the most famous man of all those times,

Merlin, who knew the range of all  
 their arts,  
 Had built the King his havens, ships,  
 and halls,  
 Was also Bard, and knew the starry  
 heavens ;  
 The people call'd him Wizard ; whom  
 at first  
 She play'd about with slight and  
 sprightly talk,  
 And vivid smiles, and faintly-venom'd  
 points  
 Of slander, glancing here and gazing  
 there ;  
 And yielding to his kindlier moods,  
 the Seer  
 Would watch her at her petulance, and  
 play,  
 E'en when they seem'd unlovable, and  
 laugh  
 As those that watch a kitten ; thus he  
 grew  
 Tolerant of what he half disdain'd, and  
 she,  
 Perceiving that she was but half dis-  
 dain'd,  
 Began to break her sports with graver  
 fits,  
 Turn red or pale, would often when  
 they met  
 Sigh fully, or all-silent gaze upon him  
 With such a fixt devotion, that the old  
 man,  
 Tho' doubtful, felt the flattery, and at  
 times  
 Would flatter his own wish in age for  
 love,  
 And half believe her true : for thus at  
 times  
 He waver'd ; but that other clung to  
 him,  
 Fixt in her will, and so the seasons  
 went.  
 Then fell upon him a great melan-  
 choly ;  
 And leaving Arthur's court he gain'd  
 the beach ;  
 There found a little boat, and stept  
 into it ;  
 And Vivien follow'd, but he mark'd  
 her not.  
 She took the helm and he the sail ; the  
 boat  
 Drave with a sudden wind across the  
 deeps,  
 And touching Breton sands, they disem-  
 bark'd.  
 And then she follow'd Merlin all the  
 way,  
 Ev'n to the wild woods of Broceliande.  
 For Merlin once had told her of a  
 charm,  
 The which if any wrought on any one  
 With woven paces and with waving  
 arms,  
 The man so wrought on ever seem'd to  
 lie  
 Closed in the four walls of a hollow  
 tower, [more ;  
 From which was no escape for ever-

And none could find that man for ever-  
 more,  
 Nor could he see but him who wrought  
 the charm  
 Coming and going, and he lay as dead  
 And lost to life and use and name and  
 fame.  
 And Vivien ever sought to work the  
 charm  
 Upon the great Enchanter of the Time,  
 As fancying, that her glory would be  
 great  
 According to his greatness whom she  
 quench'd.

There lay she all her length and  
 kiss'd his feet,  
 As if in deepest reverence and in love.  
 A twist of gold was round her hair ; a  
 robe  
 Of samite without price, that more  
 exprest  
 Than hid her, clung about her lissome  
 limbs,  
 In color like the satin-shining palm  
 On shallows in the windy gleams of  
 March :  
 And while she kiss'd them, crying,  
 "Trample me,  
 Dear feet, that I have follow'd thro'  
 the world,  
 And I will pay you worship ; tread me  
 down  
 And I will kiss you for it ;" he was  
 mute :  
 So dark a forethought roll'd about his  
 brain,  
 As on a dull day in an Ocean cave  
 The blind wave feeling round his long  
 sea-hall  
 In silence : wherefore, when she lifted  
 up  
 A face of sad appeal, and spake and  
 said,  
 "O Merlin, do ye love me?" and  
 again,  
 "O Merlin, do ye love me?" and once  
 more,  
 "Great Master, do ye love me?" he  
 was mute.  
 And lissome Vivien, holding by his  
 heel,  
 Writhed toward him, slid up his  
 knee and sat,  
 Behind his ankle twined her hollow  
 feet  
 Together, curved an arm about his  
 neck,  
 Clung like a snake ; and letting her  
 left hand  
 Droop from his mighty shoulder, as a  
 leaf,  
 Made with her right a comb of pearl to  
 part  
 The lists of such a beard as youth gone  
 out  
 Had left in ashes : then he spoke and  
 said,  
 Not looking at her, "who are wise in  
 love

Love most, say least," and Vivien answer'd quick,

"I saw the little elf-god eyeless once  
In Arthur's arras hall at Camelot:  
But neither eyes nor tongue—O stupid child!

Yet you are wise who say it; let me think

Silence is wisdom: I am silent then  
And ask no kiss;" then adding all at once,

"And lo, I clothe myself with wisdom," drew

The vast and shaggy mantle of his beard

Across her neck and bosom to her knee,

And call'd herself a gilded summer fly  
Caught in a great old tyrant spider's web,

Who meant to eat her up in that wild wood

Without one word. So Vivien call'd herself,

But rather seem'd a lovely baleful star  
Veil'd in gray vapor; till he sadly smiled:

"To what request for what strange boon," he said

"Are these your pretty tricks and fooleries,

O Vivien, the preamble? yet my thanks,  
For these have broken up my melancholy."

And Vivien answer'd smiling saucily,  
"What, O my Master, have ye found your voice?

I bid the stranger welcome. Thanks at last!

But yesterday you never open'd lip,  
Except indeed to drink: no cup had we:

In mine own lady palms I cull'd the spring

That gather'd trickling dropwise from the cleft,

And made a pretty cup of both my hands

And offer'd you it kneeling: then ye drank

And knew no more, nor gave me one poor word;

O no more thanks than might a goat have given

With no more sign of reverence than a beard.

And when we halted at that other well,  
And I was faint to swooning, and ye lay

Foot-gilt with all the blossom-dust of those

Deep meadows we had traversed, did you know

That Vivien bathed your feet before her own?

And yet no thanks: and all thro' this wild wood

And all this morning when I fondled you:

Boon, yes, there was a boon, one not so strange—

How had I wrong'd you? surely you are wise,

But such a silence is more wise than kind."

And Merlin lock'd his hand in hers and said;

"O did you never lie upon the shore,  
And watch the curl'd white of the coming wave

Glass'd in the slippery sand before it breaks?

Ev'n such a wave, but not so pleasurable,

Dark in the glass of some presageful mood,

Had I for three days seen, ready to fall.

And then I rose and fled from Arthur's court

To break the mood. You follow'd me unask'd;

And when I look'd, and saw you following still,

My mind involved yourself the nearest thing

In that mind-mist: for shall I tell you truth?

You seem'd that wave about to break upon me

And sweep me from my hold upon the world,

My use and name and fame. Your pardon, child,

Your pretty sports have brighten'd all again.

And ask your boon, for boon I owe you thrice,

Once for wrong done you by confusion, next

For thanks it seems till now neglected, last

For these your dainty gambols: wherefore ask;

And take this boon so strange and not so strange."

And Vivien answer'd smiling mournfully;

"O not so strange as my long asking it,

Nor yet so strange as you yourself are strange,

Nor half so strange as that dark mood of yours.

I ever fear'd ye were not wholly mine;

And see, yourself have own'd ye did me wrong.

The people call you prophet: let it be

But not of those that can expound themselves.

Take Vivien for expounder: she will call

That three-day-long presageful gloom of yours

No presage, but the same mistrustful mood

That makes you seem less noble than yourself

Whenever I have ask'd this very boon,  
 Now ask'd again : for see you not,  
 dear love,  
 That such a mood as that, which lately  
 gloom'd  
 Your fancy when you saw me follow-  
 ing you,  
 Must make me fear still more you  
 are not mine,  
 Must make me yearn still more to prove  
 you mine,  
 And make me wish still more to learn  
 this charm  
 Of woven paces and of waving hands,  
 As proof of trust. O Merlin, teach it  
 me.  
 The charm so taught will charm us both  
 to rest.  
 For, grant me some slight power upon  
 your fate,  
 I, feeling that you felt me worthy  
 trust,  
 Should rest and let you rest, knowing  
 you mine.  
 And therefore be as great as you are  
 named,  
 Not muffled round with selfish reti-  
 cence.  
 How hard you look and how denyingly!  
 O, if you think this wickedness in me,  
 That I should prove it on you unawares,  
 To make you lose your use and name  
 and fame,  
 That makes me most indignant : then  
 our bond  
 Had best be loosed for ever : but think  
 or not,  
 By Heaven that hears I tell you the  
 clean truth,  
 As clean as blood of babes, as white as  
 milk :  
 O Merlin, may this earth, if ever I,  
 If these unwitty wandering wits of  
 mine,  
 Ev'n in the jumbled rubbish of a dream,  
 Have tript on such conjectural treach-  
 ery—  
 May this hard earth cleave to the Nadir  
 hell  
 Down, down, and close again, and nip  
 me flat,  
 If I be such a traitress. Yield my  
 boon,  
 Till which I scarce can yield you all I  
 am ;  
 And grant my re-reiterated wish,  
 The great proof of your love : because  
 I think,  
 However wise, ye hardly know me yet."

And Merlin loosed his hand from  
 hers and said,  
 " I never was less wise, however wise,  
 Too curious Vivien, tho' you talk of  
 trust,  
 Than when I told you first of such a  
 charm.  
 Yea, if ye talk of trust I tell you this,  
 Too much I trusted, when I told you  
 that,

And stirr'd this vice in you which  
 ruin'd man  
 Thro' woman the first hour ; for how  
 soe'er  
 In children a great curiousness be  
 well,  
 Who have to learn themselves and all  
 the world,  
 In you, that are no child, for still I find  
 Your face is practised, when I spell the  
 lines,  
 I call it,—well, I will not call it vice :  
 But since you name yourself the sum-  
 mer fly,  
 I well could wish a cobweb for the  
 gnat,  
 That settles, beaten back, and beaten  
 back  
 Settles, till one could yield for wear-  
 ness :  
 But since I will not yield to give you  
 power  
 Upon my life and use and name and  
 fame,  
 Why will you never ask some other  
 boon ?  
 Yea, by God's rood, I trusted you too  
 much."

And Vivien, like the tenderest-heart-  
 ed maid  
 That ever bided tryst at village stile,  
 Made answer, either eyelid wet with  
 tears.  
 " Nay, master, be not wrathful with  
 your maid ;  
 Caress her : let her feel herself for-  
 given  
 Who feels no heart to ask another  
 boon.  
 I think you hardly know the tender  
 rhyme  
 Of ' trust me not at all or all in all.'  
 I heard the great Sir Lancelot sing it  
 once,  
 And it shall answer for me. Listen to  
 it.

' In Love, if Love be Love, if Love be  
 ours,  
 Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal  
 powers :  
 Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.  
 ' It is the little rift within the lute,  
 That by and by will make the music  
 mute,  
 And ever widening slowly silence all.

' The little rift within the lover's  
 lute  
 Or little pitted speck in garner'd fruit,  
 That rotting inward slowly moulders  
 all.

' It is not worth the keeping : let it  
 go :  
 But shall it ? answer, darling, answer,  
 no.  
 And trust me not at all or all in all.'  
 O master, do ye love my tender  
 rhyme ?"

And Merlin look'd and half believed  
her true,  
So tender was her voice, so fair her  
face,  
So sweetly gleam'd her eyes behind her  
tears  
Like sunlight on the plain behind a  
shower:  
And yet he answer'd half indignantly.

"Far other was the song that once I  
heard  
By this huge oak, sung nearly where  
we sit:  
For here we met, some ten or twelve  
of us,  
To chase a creature that was current  
then  
In these wild woods, the hart with  
golden horns.  
It was the time when first the question  
rose  
About the founding of a Table Round,  
That was to be, for love of God and  
men  
And noble deeds, the flower of all the  
world.  
And each incited each to noble deeds.  
And while we waited one, the youngest  
of us,  
We could not keep him silent, out he  
flash'd,  
And into such a song, such fire for  
fame,  
Such trumpet-blowings in it, coming  
down  
To such a stern and iron-clashing close,  
That when he stopt we long'd to hurl  
together,  
And should have done it; but the  
beauteous beast  
Scared by the noise upstart'd at our  
feet,  
And like a silver shadow slipt away  
Thro' the dim land; and all day long  
we rode  
Thro' the dim land against a rushing  
wind,  
That glorious roundel echoing in our  
ears,  
And chased the flashes of his golden  
horns  
Until they vanish'd by the fairy well.  
That laughs at iron—as our warriors  
did—  
Where children cast their pins and  
nails, and cry,  
'Laugh, little well,' but touch it with  
a sword,  
It buzzes wildly round the point; and  
there  
We lost him: such a noble song was  
that.  
But, Vivien, when you sang me that  
sweet rhyme,  
I felt as tho' you knew this cursed  
charm,  
Were proving it on me, and that I lay  
And felt them slowly ebbing, name  
and fame."

And Vivien answer'd smiling mourn  
fully;  
"O mine have ebb'd away for ever—  
more,  
And all thro' following you to this  
wild wood,  
Because I saw you sad, to comfort you.  
Lo now, what hearts have men! they  
never mount  
As high as woman in her selfless mood.  
And touching fame, howe'er ye scorn  
my song,  
Take one verse more—the lady speaks  
it—this:

'My name, once mine, now thine, is  
closelier mine,  
For fame, could fame be mine, that  
fame were thine,  
And shame, could shame be thine, that  
shame were mine.  
So trust me not at all or all in all.'

"Says she not well? and there is  
more—this rhyme  
Is like the fair pearl-necklace of the  
Queen,  
That burst in dancing, and the pearls  
were spilt;  
Some lost, some stolen, some as relics  
kept.  
But nevertheless the same two sister  
pearls  
Ran down the silken thread to kiss  
each other  
On her white neck—so is it with this  
rhyme:  
It lives dispersedly in many hands,  
And every minstrel sings it differ-  
ently;  
Yet is there one true line, the pearl of  
pearls;  
'Man dreams of Fame while woman  
wakes to love,'  
True: Love, tho' Love were of the  
grossest, carves  
A portion from the solid present, eats  
And uses, careless of the rest; but  
Fame  
The Fame that follows death is nothing  
to us;  
And what is Fame in life but half-dis-  
fame,  
And counterchanged with darkness?  
you yourself  
Know well that Envy calls you Devil's  
son,  
And since you seem the Master of all  
Art,  
They fain would make you Master of  
all Vice."

And Merlin lock'd his hand in hers  
and said,  
"I once was looking for a magic weed,  
And found a fair young squire who sat  
alone,  
Had carved himself a knightly shield  
of wood,  
And then was painting on it fancied  
arms,

Azure, an Eagle rising or, the Sun  
In dexter chief; the scroll 'I follow  
fame.'

And speaking not, but leaning over  
him,

I took his brush and blotted out the  
bird,

And made a Gardener putting in a  
graft,

With this for motto, 'Rather use than  
fame.'

You should have seen him blush; but  
afterwards

He made a stalwart knight. O Vivien,  
For you, methinks you think you love

me well;  
For me, I love you somewhat; rest:

and Love  
Should have some rest and pleasure in

himself,  
Not ever be too curious for a boon,

To purient for a proof against the  
grain

Of him you say you love: but, Fame  
with men,

Being but ampler means to serve man-  
kind,

Should have small rest or pleasure in  
herself,

But work as vassal to the larger love,  
That dwarfs the petty love of one to

one.  
Use gave me Fame at first, and Fame

again  
Increasing gave me use. Lo, there my

boon!  
What other? for men sought to prove

me vile,  
Because I wish'd to give them greater

minds:  
And then did Envy call me Devil's son:

The sick weak beast seeking to help  
herself

By striking at her better, miss'd, and  
brought

Her own claw back, and wounded her  
own heart.

Sweet were the days when I was all un-  
known,

But when my name was lifted up, the  
storm

Broke on the mountain and I cared  
not for it.

Right well know I that Fame is half-  
disfame,

Yet needs must work my work. That  
other fame,

So one at least, who hath not children,  
vague,

The cackle of the unborn about the  
grave,

I cared not for it: a single misty star,  
Which is the second in a line of stars

That seem a sword beneath a belt of  
three,

I never gazed upon it but I dreamt,  
Of some vast charm concluded in that

star  
To make fame nothing. Wherefore, if

I fear,

Giving you power upon me thro' this  
charm,

That you might play me falsely, having  
power,

However well you think you love me  
now

(As sons of kings loving in pupilage  
Have turn'd to tyrants when they came

to power)  
I rather dread the loss of use than

fame;  
If you—and not so much from wicked-

ness,  
As some wild turn of anger, or a mood

Of overstrain'd affection, it may be,  
To keep me all to your own self, or

else  
A sudden spurt of woman's jealousy,—

Should try this charm on whom you  
say you love."

And Vivien answer'd smiling as in  
wrath.

"Have I not sworn? I am not trusted.  
Good!

Well, hide it, hide it; I shall find it  
out;

And being found take heed of Vivien.  
A woman and not trusted, doubtless I

Might feel some sudden turn of anger  
born

Of your misfaith; and your fine  
epithet

Is accurate too, for this full love of  
mine

Without the full heart back may merit  
well

Your term of overstrain'd. So used  
as I,

My daily wonder is, I love at all.  
And as to woman's jealousy, O why

not?  
O to what end, except a jealous one,

And one to make me jealous if I love,  
Was this fair charm invented by your-

self?  
I well believe that all about this world

Ye cage a buxom captive here and  
there,

Closed in the four walls of a hollow  
tower

From which is no escape for ever-  
more."

Then the great Master merrily an-  
swer'd her.

"Full many a love in loving youth was  
mine,

I needed then no charm to keep them  
mine

But youth and love; and that full  
heart of yours

Whereof you prattle, may now assure  
you mine;

So live uncharm'd. For those who  
wrought it first,

The wrist is parted from the hand that  
waved,

The feet unmortised from their ankle-  
bones

Who paced it ages, back : but will ye  
hear  
The legend as in guerdon for your  
rhyme?

"There lived a king in the most  
Eastern East,  
Less old than I, yet older, for my blood  
Hath earnest in it of far springs to be.  
A tawny pirate anchor'd in his port,  
Whose bark had plunder'd twenty  
nameless isles;  
And passing one, at the high peep of  
dawn,

He saw two cities in a thousand boats  
All fighting for a woman on the sea.  
And pushing his black craft among  
them all,

He lightly scatter'd theirs and brought  
her off,

With loss of half his people arrow-  
slain;

A maid so smooth, so white, so wonder-  
ful,

They said a light came from her when  
she moved :

And since the pirate would not yield  
her up,

The King impaled him for his piracy ;  
Then made her Queen : but those isle-  
nurtur'd eyes

Waged such unwilling tho' successful  
war

On all the youth, they sicken'd ; coun-  
cils thinn'd,

And armies waned, for magnet-like  
she drew

The rustiest iron of old fighters' hearts ;  
And beasts themselves would worship ;  
camels knelt

Unbidden, and the brutes of mountain  
back

That carry kings in castles, bow'd  
black knees

Of homage, ringing with their serpent  
hands,

To make her smile, her golden ankle-  
bells.

What wonder, being jealous, that he  
sent

His horns of proclamation out thro' all  
The hundred under-kingdoms that he  
sway'd

To find a wizard who might teach the  
King

Some charm, which being wrought  
upon the Queen

Might keep her all his own : to such a  
one

He promised more than ever king has  
given,

A league of mountain full of golden  
mines,

A province with a hundred miles of  
coast,

A palace and a princess, all for him :  
But on all those who tried and fail'd,

Pronounced a dismal sentence, mean-  
ing by it

To keep the list low and pretenders  
back,  
Or like a king, not to be trifled with—  
Their heads should moulder on the  
city gates.

And many tried and fail'd, because the  
charm

Of nature in her overbore their own :  
And many a wizard brow bleach'd on  
the walls :

And many weeks a troop of carrion  
crows

Hung like a cloud above the gateway  
towers."

And Vivien breaking in upon him  
said :

"I sit and gather honey ; yet, me-  
thinks,

Your tongue has tript a little : ask  
yourself.

The lady never made *unwilling* war  
With those fine eyes : she had her  
pleasure in it,

And made her good man jealous with  
good cause.

And lived there neither dame nor dam-  
sel then

Wroth at a lover's loss ? were all as  
tame,

I mean, as noble, as their Queen was  
fair ?

Not one to flirt a venom at her eyes,  
Or pinch a murderous dust into her  
drink,

Or make her paler with a poison'd  
rose ?

Well, those were not our days : but did  
they find

A wizard ? Tell me, was he like to  
thee ?"

She ceased, and made her lithe arm  
round his neck

Tighten, and then drew back, and let  
her eyes

Speak for her, glowing on him, like a  
bride's

On her new lord, her own, the first of  
men.

He answer'd laughing, "Nay, not  
like to me.

At last they found—his foragers for  
charms—

A little glassy-headed hairless man,  
Who lived alone in a great wild on  
grass ;

Read but one book, and ever reading  
grew

So grated down and filed away with  
thought,

So lean his eyes were monstrous ; while  
the skin

Clung but to crate and basket, ribs  
and spine.

And since he kept his mind on one  
sole aim,

Nor ever touch'd fierce wine, nor tasted  
flesh,

Nor own'd a sensual wish, to him the wall  
That sunders ghosts and shadow-casting men  
Became a crystal, and he saw them thro' it,  
And heard their voices talk behind the wall,  
And learnt their elemental secrets, powers  
And forces; often o'er the sun's bright eye  
Drew the vast eyelid of an inky cloud,  
And lash'd it at the base with slanting storm;  
Or in the noon of mist and driving rain,  
When the lake whiten'd and the pine-wood roar'd,  
And the cairn'd mountain was a shadow, sunn'd  
The world to peace again: here was the man.  
And so by force they dragg'd him to the King.  
And then he taught the King to charm the Queen  
in such-wise, that no man could see her more,  
Nor saw she save the King, who wrought the charm,  
Coming and going, and she lay as dead,  
And lost all use of life: but when the King  
Made proffer of the league of golden mines,  
The province with a hundred miles of coast,  
The palace and the princess, that old man  
Went back to his old wild, and lived on grass,  
And vanish'd, and his book came down to me."

And Vivien answer'd smiling saucily;  
"You have the book: the charm is written in it:  
Good: take my counsel: let me know it at once:  
For keep it like a puzzle chest in chest,  
With each chest lock'd and padlock'd thirty-fold,  
And whelm all this beneath as vast a mound  
As after furious battle turfs the slain  
On some wild down above the windy deep,  
I yet should strike upon a sudden means  
To dig, pick, open, find and read, the charm:  
Then, if I tried it, who should blame me then?"

And smiling as a Master smiles at one  
That is not of his school, nor any school

But that where blind and naked Ignorance  
Delivers brawling judgments, unashamed,  
On all things all day long; he answer'd her.

"You read the book, my pretty Vivien!  
O ay, it is but twenty pages long,  
But every page having an ample marge,  
And every marge enclosing in the midst  
A square of text that looks a little blot,  
The text no larger than the limbs of fleas:  
And every square of text an awful charm,  
Writ in a language that has long gone by.  
So long, that mountains have arisen since  
With cities on their flanks—you read the book!  
And every margin scribbled, crost, and cramm'd  
With comment, densest condensation, harp  
To mind and eye; but the long sleepless nights  
Of my long life have made it easy to me.  
And none can read the text, not even I;  
And none can read the comment but myself;  
And in the comment did I find the charm.  
O, the results are simple; a mere child  
Might use it to the harm of any one,  
And never could undo it: ask no more:  
For tho' you should not prove it upon me,  
But keep, that oath you swore, you might, perchance,  
Assay it on some one of the Table Round,  
And all because you dream they babble of you."

And Vivien, frowning in true anger, said:  
"What dare the full-fed liars say of me?  
They ride abroad redressing human wrongs!  
They sit with knife in meat and wine in horn.  
They bound to holy vows of chastity!  
Were I not woman, I could tell a tale.  
But you are man, you well can understand  
The shame that cannot be explain'd for shame.  
Not one of all the drove should touch me: swine!"

Then answer'd Merlin careless of her words,

"Ye breathe ~~but~~ accusation vast and  
vague,  
Spleen-born, I think, and proofless. If  
ye know,  
Set up the charge ye know, to stand or  
fall."

And Vivien answer'd frowning  
wrathfully.

"O ay, what say ye to Sir Valence, him  
Whose kinsman left him watcher o'er  
his wife

And two fair babes, and went to dis-  
tant lands;

Was one year gone, and on returning  
found

Not two but three: there lay the reck-  
ling, one

But one hour old! What said the  
happy sire?

A seven months' babe had been a truer  
gift.

Those twelve sweet moons confused  
his fatherhood."

Then answer'd Merlin "Nay, I know  
the tale.

Sir Valence wedded with an outland  
dame:

Some cause had kept him sunder'd  
from his wife:

One child they had: it lived with her:  
she died:

His kinsman travelling on his own  
affair

Was charged by Valence to bring home  
the child.

He brought, not found it therefore:  
take the truth."

"O ay," said Vivien, "overtrue a tale.  
What say ye then to sweet Sir Sagra-  
more,

That ardent man? 'to pluck the flower  
in season';

So says the song, 'I trow it is no trea-  
son.'

O Master, shall we call him overquick  
To crop his own sweet rose before the  
hour?"

And Merlin answer'd "Overquick  
are you

To catch a lothly plume fall'n from the  
wing

Of that foul bird of rapine whose whole  
prey

Is man's good name: he never wrong'd  
his bride.

I know the tale. An angry gust of  
wind

Puff'd out his torch among the myriad  
room'd

And many-corridor'd complexities  
Of Arthur's palace: then he found a  
door

And darkling felt the sculptured orna-  
ment

That wreathen round it made it seem  
his own;

And wearied out ~~made for the couch~~  
and slept,

A stainless man besides a stainless  
maid;

And either slept, nor knew of other  
there;

Till the high dawn piercing the royal  
rose

In Arthur's casement glimmer'd  
chastely down,

Blushing upon them blushing, and at  
once

He rose without a word and parted  
from her:

But when the thing was blazed about  
the court,

The brute world howling forced them  
into bonds,

And as it chanced they are happy,  
being pure."

"O ay," said Vivien, "that were like-  
ly too.

What say ye then to fair Sir Percivale  
And of the horrid foulness that he  
wrought,

The saintly youth, the spotless lamb  
of Christ,

Or some black wether of St. Satan's  
fold.

What, in the precincts of the chapel-  
yard,

Among the knightly brasses of the  
graves,

And by the cold Hic Jacets of the  
dead!"

And Merlin answer'd careless of her  
charge,

"A sober man is Percivale and pure;  
But once in life was fluster'd with new  
wine,

Then paced for coolness in the chapel-  
yard;

Where one of Satan's shepherdesses  
caught

And meant to stamp him with her  
master's mark;

And that he sinn'd, is not believable;  
For, look upon his face!—but if he  
sinn'd,

The sin that practice burns into the  
blood,

And not the one dark hour which  
brings remorse,

Will brand us, after, of whose fold we  
be:

Or else were he, the holy king, whose  
hymns

Are chanted in the minster, worse than  
all.

But is your spleen froth'd out, or have  
ye more?"

And Vivien answer'd frowning yet  
in wrath;

"O ay; what say ye to Sir Lancelot,  
friend?

Traitor or true? that commerce with  
the Queen,

I ask you, is it clamer'd by the child,  
Or whisper'd in the corner? do you  
know it?"

To which he answer'd sadly, "Yea, I  
know it.

Sir Lancelot went ambassador, at first,  
To fetch her, and she took him for the  
King;

So fixt her fancy on him: let him be.  
But have you no one word of loyal  
praise

For Arthur, blameless King and stain-  
less man?"

She answer'd with a low and chuck-  
ling laugh;

"Him? is he man at all, who knows  
and winks?

Sees what his fair bride is and does,  
and winks?

By which the good king means to  
blind himself,

And blinds himself and all the Table  
Round

To all the foulness that they work.  
Myself

Could call him (were it not for woman-  
hood)

The pretty, popular name such man-  
hood earns,

Could call him the main cause of all  
their crime;

Yea, were he not crown'd king, coward,  
and fool."

Then Merlin to his own heart, loath-  
ing, said;

"O true and tender! O my liege and  
king!

O selfless man and stainless gentleman,  
Who wouldst against thine own eye-  
witness fain

Have all men true and leal, all women  
pure;

How, in the mouths of base interpre-  
ters,

From over-fineness not intelligible  
To things with every sense as false and  
foul

As the poach'd filth that floods the  
middle street,

Is thy white blamelessness accounted  
blame!"

But Vivien deeping Merlin over-  
borne

By instance, recommenced, and let  
her tongue

Rage like a fire among the noblest  
names,

Polluting, and imputing her whole  
self,

Defaming and defacing, till she left  
Not even Lancelot brave, nor Galahad  
clean.

Her words had issue other than she  
will'd.

He dragg'd his eyebrow bushes down,  
and made

A snowy penthouse for his hollow eyes.  
And mutter'd in himself, "tell *her* the  
charm!

So, if she had it, would she rail on me  
To snare the next, and if she have it  
not,

So will she rail. What did the wan-  
ton say?

'Not mount as high;' we scarce can  
sink as low:

For men at most differ as Heaven and  
earth,

But women, worst and best, as Heaven  
and Hell.

I know the Table Round, my friends  
of old;

All brave, and many generous, and  
some chaste.

I think she cloaks the wounds of loss  
with lies;

I do believe she tempted them and  
fail'd,

She is so bitter: for fine plots may fail,  
Tho' harlots paint their talk as well

as face  
With colors of the heart that are not  
theirs.

I will not let her know: nine tithes  
of times

Face-flatterers and backbiters are the  
same.

And they, sweet soul, that most im-  
pute a crime

Are pronest to it, and impute them-  
selves,

Wanting the mental range; or low  
desire

Not to feel lowest makes them level  
all;

Yea, they would pare the mountain to  
the plain,

To leave an equal baseness; and in this  
Are harlots like the crowd, that if they  
find

Some stain or blemish in a name of  
note,

Not grieving that their greatest are so  
small,

Inflate themselves with some insane  
delight,

And judge all nature from her feet of  
clay,

Without the will to lift their eyes, and  
see

Her godlike head crown'd with spirit-  
ual fire,

And touching other worlds. I am  
weary of her."

He spoke in words part heard, in  
whispers part,

Half-suffocated in the hoary fell  
And many-winter'd fleece of throat and  
chin.

But Vivien, gathering somewhat of his  
mood,

And hearing "harlot" mutter'd twice  
or thrice,

Leapt from her session on his lap, and  
stood

Stiff as a viper frozen; loathsome sight,  
How from the rosy lips of life and love,  
Flash'd the bare-grinning skeleton of death!

White was her cheek; sharp breaths of anger puff'd  
Her fairy nostril out; her hand half-clench'd

Went faltering sideways downward to her belt,  
And feeling; had she found a dagger there

(For in a wink the false love turns to hate)

She would have stabb'd him; but she found it not:

His eye was calm, and suddenly she took

To bitter weeping like a beaten child,  
A long, long weeping, not consolable.  
Then her false voice made way broken with sobs

"O crueller than was ever told in tale,

Or sung in song! O vainly lavish'd love!

O cruel, there was nothing wild or strange,

Or seeming shameful, for what shame in love

So love be true, and not as yours is—nothing

Poor Vivien had not done to win his trust

Who call'd her what he call'd her—all her crime,

All—all—the wish to prove him wholly hers,"

She mused a little, and then clapt her hands

Together with a wailing shriek, and said:

"Stabb'd through the heart's affections to the heart!

Seethed like the kid in its own mother's milk!

Kill'd with a word worse than a life of blows!

I thought that he was gentle, being great:

O God, that I had loved a smaller man!  
I should have found in him a greater heart.

O, I, that flattering my true passion, saw

The knights, the court, the king, dark in your light,

Who love to make men darker than they are,

Because of that high pleasure which I had

To seat you sole upon my pedestal

Of worship—I am answer'd, and henceforth

The course of life that seem'd so flowery to me

With you for guide and master, only you,

Becomes the sea-cliff pathway broken short,

And ending in a ruin—nothing left,  
But into some low cave to crawl, and there,

If the wolf spare me, weep my life away,

Kill'd with inutterable unkindliness."

She paused, she turn'd away, she hung her head,

The snake of gold slid from her hair, the braid

Slipt and uncoil'd itself, she wept afresh,

And the dark wood grew darker toward the storm

In silence, while his anger slowly died  
Within him, till he let his wisdom go

For ease of heart, and half believed her true:

Call'd her to shelter in the hollow oak,  
"Come from the storm" and having

no reply,  
Gazed at the heaving shoulder, and the face

Hand-hidden, as for utmost grief or shame;

Then thrice essay'd, by tenderest-touching terms

To sleek her ruffled peace of mind, in vain.

At last she let herself be conquer'd by him,

And as the cageling newly flown returns,

The seeming-injured simple-hearted thing

Came to her old perch back, and settled there.

There while she sat, half-falling from his knees,

Half-nestled at his heart, and since he saw

The slow tear creep from her closed eyelid yet,

About her, more in kindness than in love,

The gentle wizard cast a shielding arm.  
But she dislink'd herself at once and rose

Her arms upon her breast across, and stood

A virtuous gentlewoman deeply wrong'd,

Upright and flush'd before him: then she said:

"There must be now no passages of love

Betwixt us twain henceforward evermore.

Since, if I be what I am grossly call'd,  
What should be granted which your own gross heart

Would reckon worth the taking? I will go.

In truth, but one thing now—better have died

Thrice than have ask'd it once—could make me stay—

That proof of trust—so often asked in  
vain!  
How justly, after that vile term of  
yours,  
I find with grief! I might believe you  
then,  
Who knows? once more. O, what was  
once to me  
Mere matter of the fancy, now has  
grown  
The vast necessity of heart and life.  
Farewell; think kindly of me, for I  
fear  
My fate or fault, omitting gayer youth  
For one so old, must be to love you  
still.  
But ere I leave you let me swear once  
more  
That if I schemed against your peace  
in this,  
May you just heaven, that darkens  
o'er me, send  
One flash, that, missing all things else,  
may make  
My scheming brain a cinder, if I lie."

Scarce had she ceased, when out of  
heaven a bolt  
(For now the storm was close above  
them) struck,  
Furrowing a giant oak, and javelining  
With darted spikes and splinters of the  
wood  
The dark earth round. He raised his  
eyes and saw  
The tree that shone white-listed thro'  
the gloom.  
But Vivien, fearing heaven had heard  
her oath.  
And dazzled by the livid flickering fork,  
And deafen'd with the stammering  
cracks and claps  
That follow'd, flying back and crying  
out,  
"O Merlin, tho' you do not love me,  
save,  
Yet save me!" clung to him and  
hugg'd him close;  
And call'd him dear protector in her  
fright,  
Nor yet forgot her practice in her  
fright.  
But wrought upon his mood and  
hugg'd him close.  
The pale blood of the wizard at her  
touch  
Took gayer colors, like an opal warm'd.  
She blamed herself for telling hearsay  
tales:  
She shook from fear, and for her fault  
she wept  
Of petulancy; she call'd him lord and  
liege,  
Her seer, her bard, her silver star of  
eve,  
Her God, her Merlin, the one passion-  
ate love  
Of her whole life; and ever overhead  
Bellow'd the tempest, and the rotten  
branch

Snap in the rushing of the river rain  
Above them; and in change of glare  
and gloom  
Her eyes and neck glittering went and  
came;  
Till now the storm, its burst of pas-  
sion spent,  
Moaning and calling out of other lands,  
Had left the ravaged woodland yet  
once more  
To peace; and what should not have  
been had been,  
For Merlin, overtalk'd and overworn,  
Had yielded, told her all the charm,  
and slept.

Then, in one moment, she put forth  
the charm  
Of woven paces and of waving hands,  
And in the hollow oak he lay as dead,  
And lost to life and use and name and  
fame.

Then crying "I have made his glory  
mine."  
And shrieking out "O fool!" the har-  
lot leapt  
Adown the forest, and the thicket  
closed  
Behind her, and the forest echo'd  
"fool."

LANCELOT AND ELAINE.

ELAINE the fair, Elaine the lovable,  
Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat,  
High in her chamber up a tower to the  
east  
Guarded the sacred shield of Lancelot;  
Which first she placed where morn-  
ing's earliest ray  
Might strike it, and awake her with  
the gleam;  
Then fearing rust or soilage fashion'd  
for it  
A case of silk, and braided thereupon  
All the devices blazon'd on the shield  
in their own tint, and added, of her  
wit,  
A border fantasy of branch and flower,  
And yellow-throated nestling in the  
nest.  
Nor rested thus content, but day by  
day  
Leaving her household and good father  
climb'd  
That eastern tower, and entering  
barr'd her door,  
Stript off the case, and read the naked  
shield,  
Now guess'd a hidden meaning in his  
arms,  
Now made a pretty history to herself  
Of every dint a sword had beaten in it,  
And every scratch a lance had made  
upon it,  
Conjecturing when and where: this  
cut is fresh;

That ten years back ; this dealt him at  
 Caerlyle ;  
 That at Caerleon ; this at Camelot :  
 And ah God's mercy what a stroke was  
 there !  
 And here a thrust that might have  
 kill'd, but God  
 Broke the strong lance, and roll'd his  
 enemy down,  
 And saved him : so she lived in fan-  
 tasy.

How came the lily maid by that good  
 shield  
 Of Lancelot, she that knew not ev'n  
 his name ?  
 He left it with her, when he rode to  
 tilt  
 For the great diamond in the diamond  
 jousts,  
 Which Arthur had ordain'd, and by  
 that name  
 Had named them, since a diamond was  
 the prize.

For Arthur long before they crown'd  
 him king,  
 Roving the trackless realms of Lyon-  
 nesse,  
 Had found a glen, gray boulder and  
 black tarn.  
 A horror lived about the tarn, and  
 clave  
 Like its own mists to all the mountain  
 side :  
 For here two brothers, one a king, had  
 met  
 And fought together ; but their names  
 were lost.  
 And each had slain his brother at a  
 blow,  
 And down they fell and made the glen  
 abhorr'd :  
 And there they lay till all their bones  
 were bleach'd,  
 And lichen'd into color with the crags :  
 And he, that once was king, had on a  
 crown  
 Of diamonds, one in front, and four  
 aside.  
 And Arthur came, and laboring up the  
 pass  
 All in a misty moonshine, unawares  
 Had trodden that crown'd skeleton,  
 and the skull  
 Brake from the nape, and from the  
 skull the crown  
 Roll'd into light, and turning on its  
 rims  
 Fled like a glittering rivulet to the  
 tarn :  
 And down the shingly scaur he  
 plunged, and caught,  
 And set it on his head, and in his heart  
 Heard murmurs "lo, thou likewise  
 shalt be king."

Thereafter, when a king, he had the  
 gems  
 Pluck'd from the crown, and show'd  
 them to his knights,

Saying "these jewels, whereupon I  
 chanced  
 Divinely, are the kingdom's not the  
 king's—  
 For public use : henceforward let there  
 be,  
 Once every year, a joust for one of  
 these :  
 For so by nine years' proof we needs  
 must learn  
 Which is our mightiest, and ourselves  
 shall grow  
 In use of arms and manhood, till we  
 drive  
 The Heathen, who, some say, shall  
 rule the land  
 Hereafter, which God hinder." Thus  
 he spoke :  
 And eight years past, eight jousts had  
 been, and still  
 Had Lancelot won the diamond of the  
 year,  
 With purpose to present them to the  
 Queen,  
 When all were won ; but meaning all  
 at once  
 To snare her royal fancy with a boon  
 Worth half her realm, had never  
 spoken word.

Now for the central diamond and  
 the last  
 And largest, Arthur, holding then his  
 court  
 Hard on the river nigh the place which  
 now  
 Is this world's hugest, let proclaim a  
 joust  
 At Camelot, and when the time drew  
 nigh  
 Spake (for she had been sick) to Guine-  
 vere  
 "Are you so sick, my Queen, you can  
 not move  
 To these fair jousts?" "Yea, lord,"  
 she said, "ye know it."  
 "Then will ye miss," he answer'd,  
 "the great deeds  
 Of Lancelot, and his prowess in the  
 lists,  
 A sight ye love to look on." And the  
 Queen  
 Lifted her eyes, and they dwelt lan-  
 guidly  
 On Lancelot, where he stood beside  
 the King.  
 He thinking that he read her meaning  
 there,  
 "Stay with me, I am sick ; my love is  
 more  
 Than many diamonds," yielded, and a  
 heart,  
 Love-loyal to the least wish of the  
 Queen  
 (However much he yearn'd to make  
 complete  
 The tale of diamonds for his destined  
 boon)  
 Urged him to speak against the truth,  
 and say,

"Sir King, mine ancient wound is hardly whole, And lets me from the saddle;" and the King Glanced first at him, then her, and went his way. No sooner gone than suddenly she began.

"To blame, my lord Sir Lancelot, much to blame.

Why go ye not to these fair jousts? the knights

Are half of them our enemies, and the crowd

Will murmur, lo the shameless ones, who take

Their pastime now the trustful king is gone!"

Then Lancelot vext at having lied in vain:

"Are ye so wise? ye were not once so wise,

My Queen, that summer, when ye loved me first.

Then of the crowd ye took no more account

Than of the myriad cricket of the mead,

When its own voice clings to each blade of grass,

And every voice is nothing. As to knights,

Them surely can I silence with all ease.

But now my loyal worship is allow'd Of all men: many a bard, without of-

fence, Has link'd our names together in his lay,

Lancelot, the flower of bravery, Guinevere,

The pearl of beauty: and our knights at feast

Have pledged us in this union, while the king

Would listen smiling. How then? is there more?

Has Arthur spoken aught? or would yourself,

Now weary of my service and devoir, Henceforth be truer to your faultless lord?"

She broke into a little scornful laugh.

"Arthur, my lord, Arthur, the faultless King.

That passionate perfection, my good lord—

But who can gaze upon the Sun in heaven?

He never spake word of reproach to me,

He never had a glimpse of mine untruth,

He cares not for me: only here to-day I here gleam'd a vague suspicion in his eyes:

Some meddling rogue has tamper'd with him—else

Rapt in this fancy of his Table Round, And swearing men to vows impossible, To make them like himself: but, friend, to me

He is all fault who hath no fault at all:

For who loves me must have a touch of earth;

The low sun makes the color: I am yours,

Not Arthur's, as ye know save by the bond.

And therefore hear my words: go to the jousts:

The tiny-trumpeting gnat can break our dream

When sweetest; and the vermin voices here

May buzz so loud—we scorn them, but they sting."

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of knights.

"And with what face, after my pretext made,

Shall I appear, O Queen, at Camelot, I Before a king who honors his own word,

As if it were his God's?"

"Yea," said the Queen, "A moral child without the craft to

rule, Else had he not lost me: but listen to me,

If I must find you wit: we hear it said That men go down before your spear

at a touch But knowing you are Lancelot; your great name,

This conquers: hide it therefore; go unknown:

Win! by this kiss you will: and our true king

Will then allow your pretext, O my knight,

As all for glory; for to speak him true,

Ye know right well, how meek soe'er he seem,

No keener hunter after glory breathes. He loves it in his knights more than himself:

They prove to him his work: win and return."

Then got Sir Lancelot suddenly to horse,

Wroth at himself: not willing to be known,

He left the barren-beaten thoroughfare,

Chose the green path that show'd the rarer foot,

And there among the solitary downs, Full often lost in fancy, lost his way;

Till as he traced a faintly-shadow'd track,

That all in loops and links among the dales

Ran to the Castle of Astolat, he saw  
Fired from the west, far on a hill, the  
towers.

Thither he made and wound the gate-  
way horn.

Then came an old, dumb, myriad-  
wrinkled man,

Who let him into lodging and dis-  
arm'd.

And Lancelot marvell'd at the word-  
less man ;

And issuing found the Lord of Astolat  
With two strong sons, Sir Torre and

Sir Lavaine,  
Moving to meet him in the castle

court ;  
And close behind them stept the lily

maid  
Elaine, his daughter : mother of the

house  
There was not : some light jest among

them rose  
With laughter dying down as the great

knight  
Approach'd them : then the Lord of

Astolat.  
" Whence comest thou, my guest, and

by what name  
Livest between the lips ? for by thy

state  
And presence I might guess thee chief

of those,  
After the king, who eat in Arthur's

halls.  
Him have I seen : the rest, his Table

Round,  
Known as they are, to me they are un-  
known."

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of  
knights.

" Known am I, and of Arthur's hall,  
and known,

What I by mere mischance have  
brought, my shield.

But since I go to joust as one unknown  
At Camelot for the diamond, ask me

not.  
Hereafter you shall know me—and the

shield—  
I pray you lend me one, if such you

have,  
Blank, or at least with some device not

mine."

Then said the Lord of Astolat, " Here  
is Torre's :

Hurt in his first tilt was my son, Sir  
Torre.

And so, God wot, his shield is blank  
enough.

His ye can have." Then added plain  
Sir Torre,

" Yea since I cannot use it, ye may  
have it."

Here laugh'd the father saying " Fie,  
Sir Churl,

Is that an answer for a noble knight ?  
Allow him : but Lavaine, my younger

here,

He is so full of lustihood, he will ride  
Joust for it, and win, and bring it in an  
hour

And set it in this damsel's golden hair,  
To make her thrice as wilful as be-  
fore."

" Nay, father, nay good father, shame  
me not

Before this noble knight" said young  
Lavaine

" For nothing. Surely I but play'd on  
Torre :

He seem'd so sullen, vext he could not  
go :

A jest, no more : for, knight, the maid-  
en dream,

That some one put this diamond in her  
hand,

And that it was too slippery to be held,  
And slipt and fell into some pool or

stream,  
The castle-well, belike ; and then I said

That *if* I went and *if* I fought and won  
it

(But all was jest and joke among our-  
selves)

Then must she keep it safelier. All was  
jest.

But father give me leave, and if he will,  
To ride to Camelot with this noble

knight :  
Win shall I not, but do my best to win :

Young as I am, yet would I do my  
best."

" So ye will grace me," answer'd  
Lancelot,

Smiling a moment, " with your fellow-  
ship

O'er these waste downs whereon I lost  
myself,

Then were I glad of you as guide and  
friend ;

And you shall win this diamond—as I  
hear,

It is a fair large diamond,—if ye may ;  
And yield it to this maiden, if ye will."

" A fair large diamond," added plain  
Sir Torre,

" Such be for Queens and not for sim-  
ple maids."

Then she, who held her eyes upon the  
ground,

Elaine, and heard her name so tost  
about,

Flush'd slightly at the slight disparage-  
ment

Before the stranger knight, who, look-  
ing at her,

Full courtly, yet not falsely, thus re-  
turn'd.

" If what is fair be but for what is fair,  
And only Queens are to be counted so,

Rash were my judgment then, who  
deem this maid

Might wear as fair a jewel as is on  
earth,

Not violating the bond of like to like.

He spoke and ceased: the lily maid  
 Elaine,  
 Won by the mellow voice before she  
 look'd,  
 Lifted her eyes, and read his line-  
 ments.  
 The great and guilty love he bare the  
 Queen,  
 In battle with the love he bare his lord,  
 Had marr'd his face, and mark'd it ere  
 his time.  
 Another sinning on such heights with  
 one,  
 The flower of all the west and all the  
 world,  
 Had been the sleeker of it: but in him  
 His mood was often like a fiend, and  
 rose  
 And drove him into wastes and soli-  
 tudes  
 For agony, who was yet a living soul.  
 Marr'd as he was, he seem'd the good-  
 liest man,  
 That ever among ladies ate in Hall,  
 And noblest, when she lifted up her  
 eyes.  
 However marr'd, of more than twice  
 her years,  
 Seam'd with an ancient swordcut on  
 the cheek,  
 And bruised and bronzed, she lifted up  
 her eyes  
 And loved him, with that love which  
 was her doom.

Then the great knight, the darling of  
 the court,  
 Loved of the loveliest, into that rude  
 hall  
 Stept with all grace, and not with half  
 disdain  
 Hid under grace, as in a smaller time,  
 But kindly man moving among his  
 kind:  
 Whom they with meats and vintage of  
 their best  
 And talk and minstrel melody enter-  
 tain'd.  
 And much they ask'd of court and  
 Table Round,  
 And ever well and readily answer'd he:  
 But Lancelot, when they glanced at  
 Guinevere,  
 Suddenly speaking of the wordless man,  
 Heard from the Baron that, ten years  
 before,  
 The heathen caught and reft him of his  
 tongue.  
 "He learnt and warn'd me of their  
 fierce design  
 Against my house, and him they caught  
 and maim'd;  
 But I my sons and little daughter fled  
 From bonds of death, and dwelt among  
 the woods  
 By the great river in a boatman's hut.  
 Dull days were those, till our good  
 Arthur broke  
 The Pagan yet once more on Badon  
 hill."

"O there, great Lord, doubtless,"  
 Lavaine said, rapt  
 By all the sweet and sudden passion of  
 youth.  
 Toward greatness in its elder, "you  
 have fought.  
 O tell us—for we live apart—you know  
 Of Arthur's glorious wars." And Lan-  
 celot spoke  
 And answer'd him at full, as having  
 been  
 With Arthur in the fight which all day  
 long  
 Rang by the white mouth of the violent  
 Glem;  
 And in the four wild battles by the  
 shore  
 Of Douglas; that on Bassa; then the  
 war  
 That thunder'd in and out the gloomy  
 skirts  
 Of Celidon the forest; and again  
 By castle Gurnion where the glorious  
 King  
 Had on his cuirass worn our Lady's  
 Head,  
 Carved on one emerald, center'd in a  
 sun  
 Of silver rays, that lighten'd as he  
 breathed;  
 And at Caerleon had he help'd his lord,  
 When the strong neighings of the wild  
 white Horse  
 Set every gilded parapet shuddering;  
 And up in Agned Cathregonion too,  
 And down the waste sand-shores of  
 Trath Treroit,  
 Where many a heathen fell; "and on  
 the mount  
 Of Badon I myself beheld the King  
 Charge at the head of all his Table  
 Round,  
 And all his legions crying Christ and  
 him,  
 And break them; and I saw him, after,  
 stand  
 High on a heap of slain, from spur to  
 plume  
 Red as the rising sun with heathen  
 blood,  
 And seeing me, with a great voice he  
 cried  
 'They are broken, they are broken, for  
 the King,  
 However mild he seems at home, nor  
 cares  
 For triumph in our mimic wars, the  
 jousts—  
 For if his own knight cast him down,  
 he laughs  
 Saying, his knights are better men than  
 he—  
 Yet in this heathen war the fire of God  
 Fills him: I never saw his like: there  
 lives  
 No greater leader."

While he utter'd this,  
 Low to her own heart said the lily maid  
 "Save your great self, fair lord;" and  
 when he fell

From talk of war to traits of pleasantry—  
 Being mirthful he but in a stately kind—  
 She still took note that when the living smile  
 Died from his lips, across him came a cloud  
 Of melancholy severe, from which again,  
 Whenever in her hovering to and fro  
 The lily maid had striven to make him cheer,  
 There brake a sudden-beaming tenderness  
 Of manners and of nature, and she thought  
 That all was nature, all, perchance, for her.  
 And all that night long his face before her lived,  
 As when a painter, poring on a face,  
 Divinely thro' all hindrance finds the man  
 Behind it, and so paints him that his face,  
 The shape and color of a mind and life,  
 Lives for his children, ever at its best  
 And fullest; so the face before her lived,  
 Dark-splendid, speaking in the silence, full  
 Of noble things, and held her from her sleep.  
 Till rathe she rose, half-cheated in the thought  
 She needs must bid farewell to sweet Lavaine.  
 First as in fear, step after step, she stole  
 Down the long tower-stairs, hesitating:  
 Anon, she heard Sir Lancelot cry in the court,  
 "This shield, my friend, where is it?"  
 and Lavaine  
 Past inward, as she came from out the tower.  
 There to his proud horse Lancelot turn'd, and smooth'd  
 The glossy shoulder, humming to himself.  
 Half-envious of the flattering hand, she drew  
 Nearer and stood. He look'd, and more amazed  
 Then if seven men had set upon him, saw  
 The maiden standing in the dewy light.  
 He had not dreamed she was so beautiful.  
 Then came on him a sort of sacred fear,  
 For silent, tho' he greeted her, she stood  
 Rapt on his face as if it were a God's.  
 Suddenly flash'd on her a wild desire,  
 That he should wear her favor at the tilt.  
 She braved a riotous heart in asking for it.  
 "Fair lord, whose name I know not—  
 noble it is,

I well believe, the noblest—will you wear  
 My favor at this tourney?" "Nay,"  
 said he,  
 "Fair lady, since I never yet have worn  
 Favor of any lady in the lists.  
 Such is my wont, as those, who know me, know."  
 "Yea, so," she answer'd; "then in wearing mine  
 Needs must be lesser likelihood, noble lord,  
 That those who know should know you." And he turn'd  
 Her counsel up and down within his mind,  
 And found it true, and answer'd, "true, my child.  
 Well, I will wear it: fetch it out to me:  
 What is it?" and she told him "a red sleeve  
 Broider'd with pearls," and brought it: then he bound  
 Her token on his helmet, with a smile  
 Saying, "I never yet have done so much  
 For any maiden living," and the blood  
 Sprang to her face and fill'd her with delight;  
 But left her all the paler, when Lavaine  
 Returning brought the yet-unblazon'd shield,  
 His brother's; which he gave to Lancelot,  
 Who parted with his own to fair Elaine;  
 "Do me this grace, my child, to have my shield  
 In keeping till I come." "A grace to me,"  
 She answer'd, "twice to-day. I am your Squire."  
 Whereat Lavaine said, laughing, "Lily maid,  
 For fear our people call you lily maid  
 In earnest, let be bring your color back;  
 Once, twice, and thrice: now get you hence to bed:"  
 So kiss'd her, and Sir Lancelot his own hand,  
 And thus they moved away; she stay'd a minute,  
 Then made a sudden step to the gate, and there—  
 Her bright hair blown about the serious face  
 Yet rosy-kindled with her brother's kiss—  
 Paused in the gateway, standing by the shield  
 In silence, while she watch'd their arms far-off  
 Sparkle, until they dipt below the downs.  
 Then to her tower she climb'd, and took the shield,  
 There kept it, and so lived in fantasy.

Meanwhile the two companions past  
 -way {downs,  
 Far o'er the long backs of the bushless

To where Sir Lancelot knew there lived  
a knight  
Not far from Camelot, now for forty  
years  
A hermit, who had pray'd, labor'd and  
pray'd  
And ever laboring had scoop'd himself  
In the white rock a chapel and a hall  
On massive columns, like a shorecliff  
cave,  
And cells and chambers : all were fair  
and dry ;  
The green light from the meadows un-  
derneath  
Struck up and lived along the milky  
roofs ;  
And in the meadows tremulous aspen-  
trees  
And poplars made a noise of falling  
showers.  
And thither wending there that night  
they bode.

But when the next day broke from  
undergrown,  
And shot red fire and shadows thro' the  
cave,  
They rose, heard mass, broke fast, and  
rode away :  
Then Lancelot saying, "hear, but hold  
my name  
Hidden, you ride with Lancelot of the  
Lake."  
Abash'd Lavaine, whose instant rever-  
ence,  
Dearer to true young hearts than their  
own praise,  
But left him leave to stammer, "is it  
indeed ?"  
And after muttering "the great Lance-  
lot"  
At last he got his breath and answer'd  
"One,  
One have I seen — that other, our liege  
lord,  
The dread Pendragon, Britain's king  
of kings,  
Of whom the people talk mysteriously,  
He will be there — then were I stricken  
blind  
That minute, I might say that I had  
seen."

So spake Lavaine, and when they  
reach'd the lists  
By Camelot in the meadow, let his eyes  
Run thro' the peopled gallery which  
half round  
Lay like a rainbow fall'n upon the  
grass,  
Until they found the clear-faced King,  
who sat  
Robed in red samite, easily to be  
known,  
Since to his crown the golden dragon  
clung,  
And down his robe the dragon writhed  
in gold,  
And from the carven-work behind him  
crept

Two dragons gilded, sloping down to  
make  
Arms for his chair, while all the rest  
of them  
Thro' knots and loops and folds innu-  
merable  
Fled ever thro' the woodwork, till they  
found  
The new design wherein they lost them-  
selves,  
Yet with all ease, so tender was the  
work :  
And, in the costly canopy o'er him set,  
Blazed the last diamond of the name-  
less king.  
Then Lancelot answer'd young Lavaine  
and said,  
"Me you call great : mine is the firmer  
seat,  
The truer lance : but there is many a  
youth  
Now crescent, who will come to all I  
am  
And overcome it ; and in me there  
dwells  
No greatness, save it be some far-off  
touch  
Of greatness to know well I am not  
great :  
There is the man." And Lavaine gaped  
upon him  
As on a thing miraculous, and anon  
The trumpets blew ; and then did either  
side,  
They that assail'd, and they that held  
the lists,  
Set lance in rest, strike spur, suddenly  
move,  
Meet in the midst, and there so furi-  
ously  
Shock, that a man far-off might well  
perceive,  
If any man that day were left afield,  
The hard earth shake, and a low thun-  
der of arms.  
And Lancelot bode a little, till he saw  
Which were the weaker ; then he hurl'd  
into it  
Against the stronger : little need to  
speak  
Of Lancelot in his glory : King, duke,  
earl,  
Count, baron — whom he smote, he  
overthrew.

But in the field were Lancelot's kith  
and kin,  
Ranged with the Table Round that held  
the lists,  
Strong men, and wrathful that a stran-  
ger knight  
Should do and almost overdo the deeds  
Of Lancelot ; and one said to the other  
"Lo !  
What is he ? I do not mean the force  
alone,  
The grace and versatility of the man —  
Is it not Lancelot !" "When has Lan-  
celot worn  
Favor of any lady in the lists ?

Not such his wont, as we, who know  
 him, know." "How then? who then?" a fury seized  
 on them,  
 A fiery family passion for the name  
 Of Lancelot, and a glory one with  
 theirs.  
 They couch'd their spears and prick'd  
 their steeds and thus,  
 Their plumes driv'n backward by the  
 wind they made  
 In moving, all together down upon  
 him  
 Bare, as a wild wave in the wide North-  
 sea,  
 Green-glimmering toward the summit,  
 bears, with all  
 Its stormy crests that smoke against  
 the skies,  
 Down on a bark, and overbears the  
 bark,  
 And him that helms it, so they over-  
 bore  
 Sir Lancelot and his charger, and a  
 spear  
 Down-glancing, lamed the charger, and  
 a spear  
 Prick'd sharply his own cuirass, and  
 the head  
 Pierced thro' his side, and there snapt,  
 and remain'd.

Then Sir Lavaine did well and wor-  
 shipfully;  
 He bore a knight of old repute to the  
 earth,  
 And brought his horse to Lancelot  
 where he lay.  
 He up the side, sweating with agony,  
 got,  
 But thought to do while he might yet  
 endure,  
 And being lustily holpen by the rest,  
 His party,—tho' it seemed half-mir-  
 acle  
 To those he fought with—drave his  
 kith and kin,  
 And all the Table Round that held the  
 lists,  
 Back to the barrier; then the heralds  
 blew  
 Proclaiming his the prize, who wore  
 the sleeve  
 Of scarlet, and the pearls; and all the  
 knights,  
 His party, cried "Advance, and take  
 your prize  
 The diamond;" but he answer'd,  
 "diamond me  
 No diamonds! for God's love, a little  
 air!  
 Prize me no prizes, for my prize is  
 death!  
 Hence will I and I charge you, follow  
 me not."

He spoke, and vanish'd suddenly  
 from the field  
 With young Lavaine into the poplar  
 grove.

There from his charger down he slid,  
 and sat,  
 Gasping to Sir Lavaine, "draw the  
 lance-head:"  
 "Ah my sweet lord Sir Lancelot," said  
 Lavaine,  
 "I dread me, if I draw it, ye shall  
 die."  
 But he "I die already with it: draw—  
 Draw,"—and Lavaine drew, and that  
 other gave  
 A marvellous great shriek and ghastly  
 groan,  
 And half his blood burst forth, and  
 down he sank  
 For the pure pain, and wholly swoon'd  
 away.  
 Then came the hermit out and bare  
 him in,  
 There stanch'd his wound; and there,  
 in daily doubt  
 Whether to live or die, for many a  
 week  
 Hid from the wide world's rumor by  
 the grove  
 Of poplars with their noise of falling  
 showers,  
 And ever-tremulous aspen-trees, he  
 lay.

But on that day when Lancelot fled  
 the lists,  
 His party, knights of utmost North and  
 West,  
 Lords of waste marches, kings of deso-  
 late isles,  
 Came round their great Pendragon,  
 saying to him  
 "Lo. Sire, our knight thro' whom we  
 won the day  
 Hath gone sore wounded, and hath left  
 his prize  
 Untaken, crying that his prize is  
 death."  
 "Heaven hinder," said the King,  
 "that such an one,  
 So great a knight as we have seen to-  
 day—  
 He seem'd to me another Lancelot—  
 Yea, twenty times I thought him Lance-  
 lot—  
 He must not pass uncared for. Where-  
 fore rise,  
 O Gawain, and ride forth and find the  
 knight.  
 Wounded and wearied needs must he  
 be near.  
 I charge you that you get at once to  
 horse.  
 And, knights and kings, there breathes  
 not one of you  
 Will deem this prize of ours is rashly  
 given:  
 His prowess was too wondrous. We  
 will do him  
 No customary honor: since the knight  
 Came not to us, of us to claim the  
 prize,  
 Ourselves will send it after. Rise and  
 take

This diamond, and deliver it, and return,  
And bring us where he is and how he fares,  
And cease not from your quest, until you find."

So saying from the carven flower above,  
To which it made a restless heart, he took,  
And gave, the diamond: then from where he sat  
At Arthur's right, with smiling face arose,  
With smiling face and frowning heart, a Prince  
In the mid might and flourish of his May,  
Gawain, surnamed The Courteous, fair and strong,  
And after Lancelot, Tristram, and Geraint  
And Lamorack, a good knight, but therewithal  
Sir Modred's brother, of a crafty house,  
Nor often loyal to his word, and now  
Wroth that the king's command to sally forth  
In quest of whom he knew not, made him leave  
The banquet, and concourse of knights and kings.

So all in wrath he got to horse and went;  
While Arthur to the banquet, dark in mood,  
Past, thinking "is it Lancelot who has come  
Despite the wound he spake of, all for gain  
Of glory, and has added wound to wound,  
And ridd'n away to die?" So fear'd the King,  
And, after two days' trarriance there, return'd.  
Then when he saw the Queen, embracing, ask'd,  
"Love, are you yet so sick?" "Nay, lord," she said.  
"And where is Lancelot?" Then the Queen amazed  
"Was he not with you? won he not your prize?"  
"Nay, but one like him." "Why that like was he."  
And when the King demanded how she knew,  
Said "Lord, no sooner had ye parted from us,  
Than Lancelot told me of a common talk  
That men went down before his spear at a touch,  
But knowing he was Lancelot; his great name  
Conquer'd; and therefore would he hide his name

From all men, ev'n the king, and to this end  
Had made the pretext of a hindering wound,  
That he might joust unknown of all, and learn  
If his old prowess was in aught decay'd:  
And added, 'our true Arthur, when he learns,  
Will well allow my pretext, as for gain of purer glory.'"

Then replied the King:  
"Far lovelier in our Lancelot had it been,  
In lieu of idly dallying with the truth,  
To have trusted me as he has trusted you.  
Surely his king and most familiar friend  
Might well have kept his secret. True, indeed,  
Albeit I know my knights fantastical,  
So fine a fear in our large Lancelot  
Must needs have moved my laughter: now remains  
But little cause for laughter: his own kin—  
Ill news, my Queen, for all who love him, these!  
His kith and kin, not knowing, set upon him;  
So that he went sore wounded from the field:  
Yet good news too: for goodly hopes are mine  
That Lancelot is no more a lonely heart.  
He wore, against his wont, upon his helm  
A sleeve of scarlet, broidered with great pearls,  
Some gentle maiden's gift."

"Yea, lord," she said,  
"Your hopes are mine," and saying that she choked,  
And sharply turn'd about to hide her face,  
Past to her chamber, and there flung herself  
Down on the great King's couch, and writhed upon it,  
And clench'd her fingers till they bit the palm,  
And shriek'd out "traitor" to the unhearing wall,  
Then flash'd into wild tears, and rose again,  
And moved about her palace, proud and pale.

Gawain the while thro' all the region round  
Rode with his diamond, wearied of the quest,  
Touch'd at all points, except the poplar grove,  
And came at last, tho' late, to Astolat

Whom glittering in enamell'd arms  
 the maid  
 Glanced at, and cried "What news  
 from Camelot, lord?  
 What of the knight with the red  
 sleeve?" "He won."  
 "I knew it," she said. "But parted  
 from the jousts  
 Hurt in the side," whereat she caught  
 her breath;  
 Thro' her own side she felt the sharp  
 lance go;  
 Thereon she smote her hand: well-  
 nigh she swoon'd;  
 And, while he gazed wonderingly at  
 her, came  
 The lord of Astolat out, to whom the  
 Prince  
 Reported who he was, and on what  
 quest  
 Sent, that he bore the prize and could  
 not find  
 The victor, but had ridden wildly  
 round  
 To seek him, and was wearied of the  
 search.  
 To whom the lord of Astolat "Bide  
 with us,  
 And ride no longer wildly, noble  
 Prince!  
 Here was the knight, and here he left  
 a shield;  
 This will he send or come for: further-  
 more  
 Our son is with him: we shall hear  
 anon,  
 Needs must we hear." To this the  
 courteous Prince  
 Accorded with his wonted courtesy,  
 Courtesy with a touch of traitor in it,  
 And stay'd; and cast his eyes on fair  
 Elaine:  
 Where could be found face daintier?  
 then her shape  
 From forehead down to foot perfect—  
 again  
 From foot to forehead exquisitely  
 turn'd:  
 "Well—if I bide, lo! this wild flower  
 for me!"  
 And oft they met among the garden  
 yews,  
 And there he set himself to play upon  
 her  
 With sallying wit, free flashes from a  
 height  
 Above her, graces of the court, and  
 songs,  
 Sighs, and slow smiles, and golden  
 eloquence  
 And amorous adulation, till the maid  
 Rebell'd against it, saying to him,  
 "Prince,  
 O loyal nephew of our noble King,  
 Why ask you not to see the shield he left,  
 Whence you might learn his name?  
 Why slight your King,  
 And lose the quest he sent you on,  
 and prove  
 No surer than our falcon yesterday,

Who lost the henn we slipt him at,  
 and went  
 To all the winds?" "Nay, by mine  
 head," said he,  
 "I lose it, as we lose the lark in heaven,  
 O damsel, in the light of your blue  
 eyes:  
 But an ye will it let me see the shield."  
 And when the shield was brought, and  
 Gawain saw  
 Sir Lancelot's azure lions, crown'd  
 with gold,  
 Ramp in the field, he smote his thigh,  
 and mock'd;  
 "Right was the King! our Lancelot!  
 that true man!"  
 "And right was I," she answer'd mer-  
 rily, "I,  
 Who dream'd my knight the greatest  
 knight of all."  
 "And if I dream'd," said Gawain,  
 "that you love  
 This greatest knight, your pardon!  
 lo, you know it!  
 Speak therefore: shall I waste myself  
 in vain?"  
 Full simple was her answer "What  
 know I?  
 My brethren have been all my fellow-  
 ship,  
 And I, when often they have talk'd of  
 love,  
 Wish'd it had been my mother, for  
 they talk'd,  
 Meseem'd, of what they knew not; so  
 myself—  
 I know not if I know what true love is,  
 But if I know, then, if I love not him,  
 Methinks there is none other I can  
 love."  
 "Yea, by God's death," said he, "ye  
 love him well,  
 But would not, knew ye what all  
 others know,  
 And whom he loves." "So be it,"  
 cried Elaine,  
 And lifted her fair face and moved  
 away:  
 But he pursued her cailing "Stay a  
 little!  
 One golden minute's grace: he wore  
 your sleeve:  
 Would he break faith with one I may  
 not name?  
 Must our true man change like a leaf  
 at last?  
 Nay—like enough: why then, far be it  
 from me  
 To cross our mighty Lancelot in his  
 loves!  
 And, damsel, for I deem you know full  
 well  
 Where your great knight is hidden, let  
 me leave  
 My quest with you; the diamond also:  
 here!  
 For if you love, it will be sweet to give  
 it;  
 And if he love, it will be sweet to  
 have it

From your own hand ; and whether he  
love or not,  
A diamond is a diamond. Fare you  
well  
A thousand times !—a thousand times  
farewell !  
Yet, if he love, and his love hold, we  
two  
May meet at court hereafter : there, I  
think,  
So you will learn the courtesies of the  
court,  
We two shall know each other."

Then he gave,  
And slightly kiss'd the hand to which  
he gave,  
The diamond, and all wearied of the  
quest  
Leapt on his horse, and carolling as he  
went  
A true-love ballad, lightly rode away.

Thence to the court he past ; there  
told the King  
What the King knew "Sir Lancelot is  
the knight."  
And added "Sire, my liege, so much I  
learnt ;  
But fail'd to find him tho' I rode all  
round  
The region : but I lighted on the maid,  
Whose sleeve he wore ; she loves him ;  
and to her,  
Deeming our courtesy is the truest  
law,  
I gave the diamond : she will render  
it ;  
For by mine head she knows his hid-  
ing-place."

The seldom-frowning King frown'd,  
and replied,  
"Too courteous truly ! ye shall go no  
more  
On quest of mine, seeing that ye for-  
get  
Obedience is the courtesy due to  
kings."

He spake and parted. Wroth but  
all in awe,  
For twenty strokes of the blood, with-  
out a word,  
Linger'd that other, staring after him ;  
Then shook his hair, strode off, and  
buzz'd abroad  
About the maid of Astolat, and her  
love.  
All ears were prick'd at once, all  
tongues were loosed :  
"The maid of Astolat loves Sir Lance-  
lot,  
Sir Lancelot loves the maid of Asto-  
lat."  
Some read the King's face, some the  
Queen's, and all  
Had marvel what the maid might be,  
but most  
Predoom'd her as unworthy. One old  
dame

Came suddenly on the Queen with the  
sharp news.  
She, that had heard the noise of it be-  
fore,  
But sorrowing Lancelot should have  
stoop'd so low,  
Marr'd her friend's point with pale  
tranquillity.  
So ran the tale like fire about the  
court,  
Fire in dry stubble a nine days' won-  
der flared :  
Till ev'n the knights at banquet twice  
or thrice  
Forgot to drink to Lancelot and the  
Queen,  
And pledging Lancelot and the lily  
maid  
Smiled at each other, while the Queen  
who sat  
With lips severely placid felt the knot  
Climb in her throat, and with her feet  
unseen  
Crush'd the wild passion out against  
the floor  
Beneath the banquet, where the meats  
became  
As wormwood, and she hated all who  
pledged.

But far away the maid in Astolat,  
Her guiltless rival, she that ever kept  
The one-day-seen Sir Lancelot in her  
heart,  
Crept to her father, while he mused  
alone,  
Sat on his knee, stroked his gray face  
and said,  
"Father, you call me wilful, and the  
fault  
Is yours who let me have my will, and  
now,  
Sweet father, will you let me lose my  
wits ?"  
"Nay," said he, "surely." "Where-  
fore, let me hence,"  
She answer'd, "and find out our dear  
Lavaine."  
"Ye will not lose your wits for dear  
Lavaine :  
Bide," answer'd he : "we needs must  
hear anon  
Of him, and of that other." "Ay,"  
she said,  
"And of that other, for I needs must  
hence  
And find that other, wheresoe'er he  
be,  
And with mine own hand give his dia-  
mond to him,  
Lest I be found as faithless in the  
quest  
As yon proud Prince who left the  
quest to me.  
Sweet father, I behold him in my  
dreams  
Gaunt as it were the skeleton of him-  
self,  
Death-pale, for lack of gentle maiden's  
aid.

The gentler-born the maiden, the more bound,  
 My father, to be sweet and serviceable  
 To noble knights in sickness, as ye know,  
 When these have worn their tokens—let me hence  
 I pray you." Then her father nodding said,  
 "Ay, ay, the diamond: wit you well, my child,  
 Right fain were I to learn this knight were whole,  
 Being our greatest; yea, and you must give it—  
 And sure I think this fruit is hung too high  
 For any mouth to gape for save a Queen's—  
 Nay, I mean nothing: so then, get you gone,  
 Being so very wilful you must go."

Lightly, her suit allow'd, she slept away,  
 And while she made her ready for her ride,  
 Her father's latest word humm'd in her ear,  
 "Being so very wilful you must go,"  
 And changed itself and echoed in her heart.  
 "Being so very wilful you must die."  
 But she was happy enough and shook it off,  
 As we shake off the bee that buzzes at us;  
 And in her heart she answer'd it and said,  
 "What matter, so I help him back to life?"  
 Then far away with good Sir Torre for guide  
 Rode o'er the long backs of the bushless downs  
 To Camelot, and before the city-gates  
 Came on her brother with a happy face  
 Making a roan horse caper and curvet  
 For pleasure all about a field of flowers:  
 Whom when she saw, "Lavaine," she cried,  
 "How fares my lord Sir Lancelot?"  
 He amazed,  
 "Torre and Elaine! why here? Sir Lancelot!"  
 How know ye my lord's name is Lancelot?"  
 But when the maid had told him all her tale,  
 Then turn'd Sir Torre, and being in his moods  
 Left them, and under the strange-statued gate,  
 Where Arthur's wars were render'd mystically,  
 Past up the still rich city to his kin,  
 His own far blood, which dwelt at Camelot;

And her, Lavaine across the poplar grove  
 Led to the caves: there first she saw the casque  
 Of Lancelot on the wall: her scarlet sleeve,  
 Tho' carved and cut, and half the pearls away,  
 Stream'd from it still; and in her heart she laugh'd,  
 Because he had not loosed it from his helm,  
 But meant once more perchance to tourney in it.  
 And when they gain'd the cell in which he slept,  
 His battle-writhen arms and mighty hands  
 Lay naked on the wolfskin, and a dream  
 Of dragging down his enemy made them move.  
 Then she that saw him lying unsleek, unshorn,  
 Gaunt as it were the skeleton of himself.  
 Uttered a little tender dolorous cry.  
 The sound not wonted in a place so still  
 Woke the sick knight, and while he roll'd his eyes  
 Yet blank from sleep, she started to him, saying  
 "Your prize the diamond sent you by the King:"  
 His eyes glisten'd: she fancied "is it for me?"  
 And when the maid had told him all the tale  
 Of King and Prince, the diamond sent, the quest  
 Assign'd to her not worthy of it, she knelt  
 Full lowly by the corners of his bed,  
 And laid the diamond in his open hand.  
 Her face was near, and as we kiss the child  
 That does the task assign'd, he kiss'd her face.  
 At once she slept like water to the floor.  
 "Alas," he said, "your ride has wearied you.  
 Rest must you have." "No rest for me," she said;  
 "Nay, for near you, fair lord, I am at rest."  
 What might she mean by that? his large black eyes,  
 Yet larger thro' his leanness, dwelt upon her,  
 Till all her heart's sad secret blazed itself  
 In the heart's colors on her simple face;  
 And Lancelot look'd and was perplexed in mind,  
 And being weak in body said no more;  
 But did not love the color; woman's love,

Save one, he not regarded, and so  
turn'd  
Sighing, and feign'd a sleep until he  
slept.

Then rose Elaine and glided thro'  
the fields,  
And past beneath the wildly-sculp-  
tured gates  
Far up the dim rich city to her kin ;  
There bode the night : but woke with  
dawn, and past  
Down thro' the dim rich city to the  
fields,  
Thence to the cave : so day by day she  
past  
In either twilight ghost-like to and fro  
Gliding, and every day she tended  
him,  
And likewise many a night : and Lan-  
celot  
Would, tho' he call'd his wound a  
little hurt  
Whereof he should be quickly whole,  
at times  
Brain-feverous in his heat and agony,  
seem  
Uncourteous, even he : but the meek  
maid  
Sweetly forebore him ever, being to  
him  
Meeker than any child to a rough  
nurse  
Milder than any mother to a sick  
child,  
And never woman yet, since man's  
first fall,  
Did kindlier unto man, but her deep  
love  
Upbore her ; till the hermit, skill'd in  
all  
The simples and the science of that  
time,  
Told him that her fine care had saved  
his life.  
And the sick man forgot her simple  
blush,  
Would call her friend and sister, sweet  
Elaine,  
Would listen for her coming and regret  
Her parting step, and held her ten-  
derly,  
And loved her with all love except the  
love  
Of man and woman when they love  
their best  
Closest and sweetest, and had died the  
death  
In any knightly fashion for her sake.  
And peradventure had he seen her  
first  
She might have made this and that  
other world  
Another world for the sick man ; but  
now  
The shackles of an old love straiten'd  
him,  
His honor rooted in dishonor stood,  
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely  
true.

Yet the great knight in his mid-  
sickness made  
Full many a holy vow and pure re-  
solve.  
These, as but born of sickness, could  
not live :  
For when the blood ran lustier in him  
again,  
Full often the sweet image of one  
face,  
Making a treacherous quiet in his  
heart,  
Dispersed his resolution like a cloud.  
Then if the maiden, while that ghostly  
grace  
Beam'd on his fancy, spoke, he an-  
swer'd not,  
Or short and coldly, and she knew  
right well  
What the rough sickness meant, but  
what this meant  
She knew not, and the sorrow dimm'd  
her sight,  
And drave her ere her time across the  
fields  
Far into the rich city, where alone  
She murmur'd "vain, in vain : it can-  
not be  
He will not love me : how then ? must  
I die."  
Then as a little helpless innocent bird,  
That has but one plain passage of few  
notes,  
Will sing the simple passage o'er and  
o'er  
For all an April morning, till the ear  
Wearies to hear it, so the simple maid  
Went half the night repeating, "must  
I die?"  
And now to right she turn'd, and vow  
to left,  
And found no ease in turning or in  
rest ;  
And "him or death" she mutter'd,  
"death or him,"  
Again and like a burthen, "him or  
death."

But when Sir Lancelot's deadly hurt  
was whole,  
To Astolat returning rode the three.  
There morn by morn, arraying her  
sweet self  
In that wherein she deem'd she look'd  
her best,  
She came before Sir Lancelot, for she  
thought  
"If I be loved, these are my festal  
robes,  
If not, the victim's flowers before he  
fall."  
And Lancelot ever prest upon the maid  
That she should ask some goodly gift  
of him  
For her own self or hers ; "and do not  
shun  
To speak the wish most dear to your  
true heart ;  
Such service have ye done me, that I  
make

My will of yours, and Prince and Lord  
 am I  
 In mine own land, and what I will I  
 can."  
 Then like a ghost she lifted up her face,  
 But like a ghost without the power to  
 speak.  
 And Lancelot saw that she withheld  
 her wish,  
 And bode among them yet a little  
 space  
 Till he should learn it; and one morn  
 it chanced  
 He found her in among the garden  
 yews,  
 And said, "Delay no longer, speak  
 your wish,  
 Seeing I must go to-day:" then out  
 she brake;  
 "Going? and we shall never see you  
 more.  
 And I must die for want of one bold  
 word."  
 "Speak: that I live to hear," he said,  
 "is yours."  
 Then suddenly and passionately she  
 spoke:  
 "I have gone mad. I love you: let me  
 die."  
 "Ah, sister," answer'd Lancelot,  
 "what is this?"  
 And innocently extending her white  
 arms,  
 "Your love," she said, "your love—  
 to be your wife."  
 And Lancelot answer'd, "Had I chos'n  
 to wed,  
 I had been wedded earlier, sweet  
 Elaine:  
 But now there never will be wife of  
 mine."  
 "No, no," she cried, "I care not to be  
 wife,  
 But to be with you still, to see your  
 face,  
 To serve you, and to follow you thro'  
 the world."  
 And Lancelot answer'd, "Nay, the  
 world, the world,  
 All ear and eye, with such a stupid  
 heart  
 To interpret ear and eye, and such a  
 tongue  
 To blare its own interpretation—nay,  
 Full ill then should I quit your bro-  
 ther's love,  
 And your good father's kindness."  
 And she said  
 "Not to be with you, not to see your  
 face—  
 Alas for me then, my good days are  
 done."  
 "Nay, noble maid," he answer'd, "ten  
 times nay!  
 This is not love: but love's first flash  
 in youth,  
 Most common: yea I know it of mine  
 own self:  
 And you yourself will smile at your  
 own self

Hereafter, when you yield your flower  
 of life  
 To one more fitly yours, not thrice  
 your age:  
 And then will I, for true you are and  
 sweet  
 Beyond mine old belief in womanhood,  
 More specially should your good  
 knight be poor,  
 Endow you with broad land and ter-  
 ritory  
 Even to the half my realm beyond the  
 seas,  
 So that would make you happy: fur-  
 thermore,  
 Ev'n to the death, as tho' ye were my  
 blood,  
 In all your quarrels will I be your  
 knight.  
 This will I do, dear damsel, for your  
 sake,  
 And more than this I cannot."  
 While he spoke  
 She neither blush'd nor shook, but  
 deathly-pale  
 Stood grasping what was nearest, then  
 replied;  
 "Of all this will I nothing;" and so  
 fell,  
 And thus they bore her swooning to  
 her tower.

Then spake, to whom thro' those  
 black walls of yew  
 Their talk had pierced, her father.  
 "Ay, a flash,  
 I fear me, that will strike my blossom  
 dead.  
 Too courteous are you, fair Lord  
 Lancelot.  
 I pray you, use some rough discourtesy  
 To blunt or break her passion."  
 Lancelot said,  
 "That were against me: what I can I  
 will;"  
 And there that day remain'd, and  
 toward even  
 Sent for his shield: full meekly rose  
 the maid,  
 Stript off the case, and gave the naked  
 shield;  
 Then, when she heard his horse upon  
 the stones,  
 Unclasping flung the casement back,  
 and look'd  
 Down on his helm, from which her  
 sleeve had gone.  
 And Lancelot knew the little clinking  
 sound;  
 And she by tact of love was well aware  
 That Lancelot knew that she was look-  
 ing at him.  
 And yet he glanced not up, nor wav'd  
 his hand,  
 Nor bade farewell, but sadly rode away.  
 This was the one discourtesy that he  
 used.

So in her tower alone the maiden  
 sat;

His very shield was gone; only the  
case,  
Her own poor work, her empty labor,  
left.  
But still she heard him, still his pic-  
ture form'd  
And grew between her and the pic-  
tured wall.  
Then came her father, saying in low  
tones  
"Have comfort," whom she greeted  
quietly.  
Then came her brethren saying, "Peace  
to thee  
Sweet sister," whom she answer'd with  
all calm.  
But when they left her to herself again,  
Death, like a friend's voice from a dis-  
tant field  
Approaching thro' the darkness, call'd;  
the owls  
Wailing had power upon her, and she  
mixt  
Her fancies with the swallow-rifted  
glooms  
Of evening, and the moanings of the  
wind.

And in those days she made a little  
song,  
And call'd hersong "The song of Love  
and Death."  
And sang it: sweetly could she make  
and sing.

"Sweet is true love tho' given in vain,  
in vain;  
And sweet is death who puts an end to  
pain:  
I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

"Love, art thou sweet? then bitter  
death must be:  
Love, thou art bitter; sweet is death to  
me.  
O Love, if death be sweeter, let me die.

"Sweet love, that seems not made to  
fade away,  
Sweet death, that seems to make us  
loveless clay,  
I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

"I fain would follow love, if that  
could be;  
I needs must follow death, who calls  
for me;  
Call and I follow, I follow! let me  
die."

High with the last line scaled her  
voice, and this,  
All in a fiery dawning wild with wind  
That shook her tower, the brothers  
heard, and thought  
With shuddering "Hark the Phantom  
of the house  
That ever shrieks before a death," and  
call'd  
The father, and all three in hurry and  
fear

Ran to her, and lo! the blood-red light  
of dawn  
Flared on her face, she shrilling "Let  
me die!"

As when we dwell upon a word we  
know  
Repeating, till the word we know so  
well  
Becomes a wonder and we know not  
why,  
So dwelt the father on her face and  
thought  
"Is this Elaine?" till back the maiden  
fell,  
Then gave a languid hand to each, and  
lay,  
Speaking a still good-morrow with her  
eyes.  
At last she said "Sweet brothers,  
yester night  
I seem'd a curious little maid again,  
As happy as when we dwelt among the  
woods,  
And when ye used to take me with the  
flood  
Up the great river in the boatman's  
boat.  
Only ye would not pass beyond the  
cape  
That has the poplar on it: there ye  
fixt  
Your limit, oft returning with the tide.  
And yet I cried because ye would not  
pass  
Beyond it, and far up the shining flood  
Until we found the palace of the king.  
And yet ye would not; but this night  
I dream'd  
That I was all alone upon the flood,  
And then I said "Now shall I have my  
will."  
And there I woke, but still the wish  
remain'd.  
So let me hence that I may pass at  
last  
Beyond the poplar and far up the flood,  
Until I find the palace of the king.  
There will I enter in among them all,  
And no man there will dare to mock at  
me;  
But there the fine Gawain will wonder  
at me,  
And there the great Sir Lancelot muse  
at me;  
Gawain, who bade a thousand fare-  
wells to me,  
Lancelot, who coldly went nor bade me  
one:  
And there the King will know me and  
my love,  
And there the Queen herself will pity  
me,  
And all the gentle court will welcome  
me,  
And after my long voyage I shall  
rest!"

"Peace," said her father, "O my  
child, ye seem

Light-headed, for what force is yours  
to go,  
So far, being sick? and wherefore  
would ye look  
On this proud fellow again, who scorns  
us all?"

Then the rough Torre began to heave  
and move,  
And bluster into stormy sobs and say  
"I never loved him: an I meet with  
him,  
I care not howsoever great he be,  
Then will I strike at him and strike  
him down,  
Give me good fortune, I will strike him  
dead,  
For this discomfort he hath done the  
house."

To which the gentle sister made  
reply,  
"Fret not yourself, dear brother, nor  
be wroth,  
Seeing it is no more Sir Lancelot's  
fault  
Not to love me, than it is mine to love  
Him of all men who seems to me the  
highest."  
"Highest?" the Father answer'd,  
echoing "highest?"  
(He meant to break the passion in her)  
"nay,  
Daughter, I know not what you call  
the highest;  
But this I know, for all the people  
know it,  
He loves the Queen, and in an open  
shame:  
And she returns his love in open shame.  
If this be high, what is it to be low?"

Then spake the lily maid of Astolat;  
"Sweet father, all too faint and sick  
am I  
For anger: these are slanders: never  
yet  
Was noble man but made ignoble talk.  
He makes no friend who never made a  
foe.

But now it is my glory to have loved  
One peerless, without stain: so let me  
pass,  
My father, howso'er I seem to you,  
Not all unhappy, having loved God's  
best  
And greatest, tho' my love had no  
return:  
Yet, seeing ye desire your child to live,  
Thanks, but ye work against your own  
desire:  
For if I could believe the things ye say  
I should but die the sooner; where-  
fore cease  
Sweet father, and bid call the ghostly  
man  
Hither, and let me shrive me clean,  
and die."

So when the ghostly man had come  
and gone,

She with a face, bright as for sin for-  
given,  
Besought Lavaine to write as she  
devised  
A letter, word for word; and when he  
ask'd  
"Is it for Lancelot, is it for my dear  
lord?  
Then will I bear it gladly;" she replied,  
"For Lancelot and the Queen and all  
the world,  
But I myself must bear it." Then he  
wrote  
The letter she devised; which being  
writ  
And folded, "O sweet father, tender  
and true,  
Deny me not," she said—"ye never  
yet  
Denied my fancies—this, however  
strange,  
My latest: lay the letter in my hand  
A little ere I die, and close the hand  
Upon it; I shall guard it even in death.  
And when the heat is gone from out  
my heart,  
Then take the little bed on which I  
died  
For Lancelot's love, and deck it like  
the Queen's  
For richness, and me also like the  
Queen  
In all I have of rich, and lay me on it.  
And let there be prepared a chariot-  
bier  
To take me to the river, and a barge  
Be ready on the river, clothed in black.  
I go in state to court, to meet the  
Queen.  
There surely I shall speak for mine  
own self,  
And none of you can speak for me so  
well.  
And therefore let our dumb old man  
alone  
Go with me, he can steer and row, and  
he  
Will guide me to that palace, to the  
doors."

She ceased: her father promised;  
whereupon  
She grew so cheerful that they deem'd  
her death  
Was rather in the fantasy than the  
blood.  
But ten slow mornings past, and on  
the eleventh  
Her father laid the letter in her hand,  
And closed the hand upon it, and she  
died.  
So that day there was dole in Astolat.

But when the next sun brake from  
underground,  
Then, those two brethren slowly with  
bent brows  
Accompanying the sad chariot-bier  
Past like a shadow thro' the field, that  
shone

Full-summer, to that stream whereon  
the barge,  
Pall'd all its length in blackest samite,  
lay.  
There sat the lifelong creature of the  
house,  
Loyal, the dumb old servitor, on deck,  
Winking his eyes, and twisted all his  
face.  
So those two brethren from the chariot  
took  
And on the black decks laid her in her  
bed,  
Set in her hand a lily, o'er her hung  
The silken case with braided blazonings,  
And kiss'd her quiet brows, and saying  
to her  
"Sister, farewell for ever," and again  
"Farewell, sweet sister," parted all in  
tears.  
Then rose the dumb old servitor, and  
the dead  
Steer'd by the dumb went upward with  
the flood—  
In her right hand the lily, in her left  
The letter—all her bright hair stream-  
ing down—  
And all the coverlid was cloth of gold  
Drawn to her waist, and she herself in  
white  
All but her face, and that clear-fea-  
tured face  
Was lovely, for she did not seem as  
dead  
But fast asleep, and lay as tho' she  
smiled.

That day Sir Lancelot at the palace  
craved  
Audience of Guinevere, to give at last  
The price of half a realm, his costly  
gift,  
Hard-won and hardly won with bruise  
and blow,  
With deaths of others, and almost his  
own,  
The nine-years-fought-for diamonds :  
for he saw  
One of her house, and sent him to the  
Queen  
Bearing his wish, whereto the Queen  
agreed  
With such and so unmoved a majesty  
She might have seem'd her statue, but  
that he,  
Low-drooping till he wellnigh kiss'd  
her feet  
For loyal awe, saw with a sidelong eye  
The shadow of a piece of pointed lace,  
In the Queen's shadow, vibrate on the  
walls,  
And parted, laughing in his courtly  
heart.

All in an oriel on the summer side,  
Vine-clad, of Arthur's palace toward  
the stream,  
They met, and Lancelot kneeling ut-  
ter'd, "Queen,  
Lady, my liege, in whom I have my  
joy,

Take, what I had not won except for  
you,  
These jewels, and make me happy,  
making them  
An armlet for the roundest arm on  
earth,  
Or necklace for a neck to which the  
swan's  
Is tawnier than her cygnet's : these  
are words :  
Your beauty is your beauty, and I sin  
In speaking, yet O grant my worship  
of it  
Words, as we grant grief tears. Such  
sin in words  
Perchance, we both can pardon : but,  
my Queen,  
I hear of rumors flying thro' your  
court.  
Our bond, as not the bond of man and  
wife,  
Should have in it an absoluter trust  
To make up that defect : let rumors  
be :  
When did not rumors fly ? these, as I  
trust  
That you trust me in your own noble-  
ness,  
I may not well believe that you be-  
lieve."

While thus he spoke, half turn'd  
away, the Queen  
Brake from the vast oriel-embowering  
vine  
Leaf after leaf, and tore, and cast  
them off,  
Till all the place whereon she stood  
was green ;  
Then, when he ceased, in one cold  
passive hand  
Received at once and laid aside the  
gems  
There on a table near her, and re-  
plied.

"It may be, I am quicker of belief  
Than you believe me, Lancelot of the  
Lake  
Our bond is not the bond of man and  
wife.  
This good is in it, whatsoe'er of ill,  
It can be broken easier. I for you  
This many a year have done despite  
and wrong  
To one whom ever in my heart of  
hearts  
I did acknowledge nobler. What are  
these ?  
Diamonds for me ? they had been  
thrice their worth  
Being your gift, had you not lost your  
own.  
To loyal hearts the value of all gifts  
Must vary as the giver's. Not for me !  
For her ! for your new fancy. Only  
this  
Grant me, I pray you : have your joys  
apart.  
I doubt not that however changed, you  
keep

So much of what is graceful : and myself  
 Would shun to break those bounds of courtesy  
 In which as Arthur's queen I move and rule :  
 So cannot speak my mind. An end to this !  
 A strange one ! yet I take it with Amen.  
 So pray you, add my diamonds to her pearls ;  
 Deck her with these ; tell her she shines me down :  
 An armlet for an arm to which the Queen's  
 Is haggard, or a necklace for a neck  
 O as much fairer — as a faith once fair  
 Was richer than these diamonds — hers not mine —  
 Nay, by the mother of our Lord himself,  
 Or hers or mine, mine now to work my will —  
 She shall not have them."

Saying which she seized,  
 And, thro' the casement standing wide for heat,  
 Flung them, and down they flash'd, and smote the stream.  
 Then from the smitten surface flash'd, as it were,  
 Diamonds to meet them, and they past away.  
 Then while Sir Lancelot leant, in half disgust  
 At love, life, all things, on the window ledge,  
 Close underneath his eyes, and right across  
 Where these had fallen, slowly past the barge  
 Whereon the lily maid of Astolat  
 Lay smiling, like a star in blackest night.

But the wild Queen, who saw not, burst away  
 To weep and wail in secret ; and the barge,  
 On to the palace-doorway sliding, paused.  
 There two stood arm'd, and kept the door ; to whom,  
 All up the marble stair, tier over tier,  
 Were added mouths that gaped, and eyes that ask'd  
 "What is it?" but that oarsman's haggard face,  
 As hard and still as is the face that men  
 Shape to their fancy's eye from broken rocks  
 Or some cliff-side, appall'd them, and they said,  
 "He is enchanted, cannot speak — and she,  
 Look how she sleeps — the Fairy Queen, so fair !

Yea, but how pale ! what are they ? flesh and blood ?  
 Or come to take the King to fairy land ?  
 For some do hold our Arthur cannot die,  
 But that he passes into fairy land."

While thus they babbled of the King, the King  
 Came girt with knights : then turn'd the tongueless man  
 From the half-face to the full eye, and rose  
 And pointed to the damsel, and the doors.  
 So Arthur bade the meek Sir Percivale  
 And pure Sir Galahad to uplift the maid :  
 And reverently they bore her into hall.  
 Then came the fine Gawain and wonder'd at her,  
 And Lancelot later came and mused at her,  
 And last the Queen herself and pitied her :  
 But Arthur spied the letter in her hand,  
 Stoop'd, took, brake seal, and read it ; this was all.

"Most noble lord, Sir Lancelot of the Lake,  
 I, sometime call'd the maid of Astolat,  
 Come, for you left me taking no farewell,  
 Hither, to take my last farewell of you.  
 I loved you, and my love had no return,  
 And therefore my true love has been my death.  
 And therefore to our lady Guinevere,  
 And to all other ladies, I make moan.  
 Pray for my soul, and yield me burial.  
 Pray for my soul thou too, Sir Lancelot,  
 As thou art a knight peerless."

Thus he read, And ever in the reading, lords and dames  
 Wept, looking often from his face who read  
 To hers which lay so silent, and at times,  
 So touch'd were they, half-thinking that her lips,  
 Who had devised the letter, moved again.

Then freely spoke Sir Lancelot to them all ;  
 "My lord liege Arthur, and all ye that hear,  
 Know that for this most gentle maiden's death  
 Right heavy am I ; for good she was and true,

But loved me with a love beyond all  
love  
In women, whomsoever I have known.  
Yet to be loved makes not to love  
again;  
Not at my years, however it hold in  
youth.  
I swear by truth and knighthood that  
I gave  
No cause, not willingly, for such a  
love:  
To this I call my friends in testimony,  
Her brethren, and her father, who  
himself  
Besought me to be plain and blunt,  
and use,  
To break her passion, some discourtesy  
Against my nature: what I could, I  
did,  
I left her and I bade her no farewell.  
Tho', had I dreamt the damsel would  
have died,  
I might have put my wits to some  
rough use,  
And help'd her from herself."

Then said the Queen  
(Sea was her wrath, yet working after  
storm)  
"Ye might at least have done her so  
much grace.  
Fair lord, as would have help'd her  
from her death."  
He raised his head, their eyes met and  
hers fell,  
He adding,  
"Queen, she would not be content  
Save that I wedded her, which could  
not be.  
Then might she follow me thro' the  
world, she ask'd;  
It could not be. I told her that her  
love  
Was but the flash of youth, would  
darken down  
To rise hereafter in a stiller flame  
Toward one more worthy of her—then  
would I,  
More specially were he, she wedded,  
poor,  
Estate them with large land and terri-  
tory  
In mine own realm beyond the narrow  
seas,  
To keep them in all joyance: more  
than this  
I could not; this she would not, and  
she died."

He pausing, Arthur answer'd, "O  
my knight,  
It will be to thy worship, as my knight,  
And mine, as head of all our Table  
Round,  
To see that she be buried worship-  
fully."

So toward that shrine which then in  
all the realm

Was richest, Arthur leading, slowly  
went  
The marshall'd order of their Table  
Round,  
And Lancelot sad beyond his wont, to  
see  
The maiden buried, not as one un-  
known,  
Nor meanly, but with gorgeous obse-  
quies,  
And mass, and rolling music, like a  
Queen.  
And when the knights had laid her  
comely head  
Low in the dust of half-forgotten kings,  
Then Arthur spake among them,  
"Let her tomb  
Be costly, and her image thereupon.  
And let the shield of Lancelot at her  
feet  
Be carven, and her lily in her hand.  
And let the story of her dolorous voy-  
age  
For all true hearts be blazon'd on her  
tomb  
In letters gold and azure!" which  
was wrought  
Thereafter; but when now the lords  
and dames  
And people, from the high doorstream-  
ing, brake  
Disorderly, as homeward each, the  
Queen,  
Who mark'd Sir Lancelot where he  
moved apart,  
Drew near, and sigh'd in passing  
"Lancelot,  
Forgive me; mine was jealousy in  
love."  
He answer'd with his eyes upon the  
ground,  
"That is love's curse; pass on, my  
Queen, forgiven."  
But Arthur who beheld his cloudy  
brows  
Approach'd him, and with full affec-  
tion flung  
One arm about his neck, and spake  
and said.

"Lancelot, my Lancelot, thou in  
whom I have  
Most love and most affiance, for I  
know  
What thou hast been in battle by my  
side,  
And many a time have watched thee  
at the tilt  
Strike down the lusty and long-prac-  
tised knight,  
And let the younger and unskill'd go  
by  
To win his honor and to make his  
name,  
And loved thy courtesies and thee, a  
man  
Made to be loved; but now I would  
to God,  
For the wild people say wild things of  
thee,

Thou couldst have loved this maiden,  
 shaped, it seems,  
 By God for thee alone, and from her  
 face,  
 If one may judge the living by the  
 dead,  
 Delicately pure and marvellously fair,  
 Who might have brought thee, now a  
 lonely man  
 Wifeless and heirless, noble issue, sons  
 Born to the glory of thy name and  
 fame,  
 My knight, the great Sir Lancelot of  
 the Lake."

Then answer'd Lancelot. "Fair she  
 was, my King,  
 Pure, as you ever wish your knights to  
 be.  
 To doubt her fairness were to want an  
 eye,  
 To doubt her pureness were to want a  
 heart—  
 Yea, to be loved, if what is worthy love  
 Could bind him, but free love will not  
 be bound."

"Free love, so bound, were freest,"  
 said the King.  
 "Let love be free; free love is for the  
 best:  
 And, after heaven, on our dull side of  
 death,  
 What should be best, if not so pure a  
 love  
 Clothed in so pure a loveliness? yet  
 thee  
 She fail'd to bind, tho' being, as I  
 think,  
 Unbound as yet, and gentle, as I  
 know."

And Lancelot answer'd nothing, but  
 he went,  
 And at the hurrying of a little brook  
 Sat by the river in a cove, and watch'd  
 The high reed wave, and lifted up his  
 eyes  
 And saw the barge that brought her  
 moving down,  
 Far-off, a blot upon the stream, and  
 said  
 Low in himself "Ah simple heart and  
 sweet,  
 Ye loved me, damsel, surely with a  
 love  
 Far tenderer than my Queen's. Pray  
 for thy soul?  
 Ay, that will I. Farewell too—now at  
 last—  
 Farewell, fair lily. 'Jealousy in love?'  
 Not rather dead love's harsh heir,  
 jealous pride?  
 Queen, if I grant the jealousy as of  
 love,  
 May not your crescent fear for name  
 and fame  
 Speak, as it waxes, of a love that  
 wanes?  
 Why did the King dwell on my name  
 to me?

Mine own name shames me, seeming a  
 reproach,  
 Lancelot, whom the Lady of the Lake  
 Stole from his mother—as the story  
 runs—  
 She chanted snatches of mysterious  
 song  
 Heard on the winding waters, eve and  
 morn  
 She kiss'd me saying thou art fair, my  
 child,  
 As a king's son, and often in her arms  
 She bare me, pacing on the dusky  
 mere.  
 Would she had drown'd me in it,  
 where'er it be!  
 For what am I? what profits me my  
 name  
 Of greatest knight? I fought for it,  
 and have it:  
 Pleasure to have it, none; to lose it,  
 pain;  
 Now grown a part of me: but what  
 use in it?  
 To make men worse by making my sin  
 known?  
 Or sin seem less, the sinner seeming  
 great?  
 Alas for Arthur's greatest knight, a  
 man  
 Not after Arthur's heart! I needs  
 must break  
 These bonds that so defame me: not  
 without  
 She wills it: would I, if she will'd it?  
 nay,  
 Who knows? but if I would not, then  
 may God,  
 I pray him, send a sudden Angel down  
 To seize me by the hair and bear me  
 far,  
 And fling me deep in that forgotten  
 mere,  
 Among the tumbled fragments of the  
 hills."

So groan'd Sir Lancelot in remorseful  
 pain,  
 Not knowing he should die a holy man.

### THE HOLY GRAIL.

FROM noiseful arms, and acts of prow-  
 ess done  
 In tournament or tilt, Sir Percivale,  
 Whom Arthur and his knighthood  
 call'd The Pure,  
 Had pass'd into the silent life of  
 prayer,  
 Praise, fast, and alms; and leaving  
 for the cowl  
 The helmet in an abbey far away  
 From Camelot, there, and not long  
 after, died.  
 And one, a fellow-monk among the  
 rest,  
 Ambrosius, loved him much beyond  
 the rest,

And honor'd him, and wrought into  
his heart  
A way by love that waken'd love with-  
in,  
To answer that which came: and as  
they sat  
Beneath a world-old yew-tree, darken-  
ing half  
The cloisters, on a gustful April morn  
That puff'd the swaying branches into  
smoke  
Above them, ere the summer when he  
died,  
The monk Ambrosius question'd Perci-  
vale:

"O brother, I have seen this yew-  
tree smoke,  
Spring after spring, for half a hundred  
years:  
For never have I known the world  
without,  
Nor ever stray'd beyond the pale: but  
thee,  
When first thou camest—such a cour-  
tesy  
Spake thro' the limbs and in the  
voice—I knew  
For one of those who eat in Arthur's  
hall;  
For good ye are and bad, and like to  
coins,  
Some true, some light, but every one  
of you  
Stamp'd with the image of the King;  
and now  
Tell me, what drove thee from the  
Table Round,  
My brother? was it earthly passion  
crost?"

"Nay," said the knight; "for no  
such passion mine.  
But the sweet vision of the Holy Grail  
Drove me from all vainglorious, rival-  
ries,  
And earthly heats that spring and  
sparkle out  
Among us in the jousts, while women  
watch  
Who wins, who falls; and waste the  
spiritual strength  
Within us, better offer'd up to Hea-  
ven."

To whom the monk: "The Holy  
Grail!—I trust  
We are green in Heaven's eyes; but  
here too much  
We moulder—as to things without I  
mean—  
Yet one of your own knights, a guest  
of ours,  
Told us of this in our refectory,  
But spake with such a sadness and so  
low  
We heard not half of what he said.  
What is it?  
The phantom of a cup that comes and  
goes?"

"Nay, monk! what phantom?" an-  
swer'd Percivale.  
"The cup, the cup itself, from which  
our Lord  
Drank at the last sad supper with his  
own.  
This, from the blessed land of Aromat—  
After the day of darkness, when the  
dead  
Went wandering o'er Moriah—the  
good saint,  
Arimathæan Joseph, journeying  
brought  
To Glastonbury, where the winter  
thorn  
Blossoms at Christmas, mindful of our  
Lord.  
And there awhile it bode; and if a  
man  
Could touch or see it, he was heal'd at  
once,  
By faith, of all his ills. But then the  
times  
Grew to such evil that the holy cup  
Was caught away to Heaven, and dis-  
appear'd."

To whom the monk: "From our old  
books I know  
That Joseph came of old to Glaston-  
bury,  
And there the heathen Prince, Arvira-  
gus,  
Gave him an isle of marsh whereon to  
build;  
And there he built with wattles from  
the marsh  
A little lonely church in days of yore,  
For so they say, these books of ours,  
but seem  
Mute of this miracle, far as I have  
read.  
But who first saw the holy thing to-  
day?"

"A woman," answer'd Percivale,  
"a nun,  
And one no further off in blood from  
me  
Than sister; and if ever holy maid  
With knees of adoration wore the  
stone,  
A holy maid; tho' never maiden glow'd,  
But that was in her earlier maiden-  
hood,  
With such a fervent flame of human  
love,  
Which being rudely blunted, glanced  
and shot  
Only to holy things; to prayer and  
praise  
She gave herself, to fast and alms.  
And yet,  
Nun as she was, the scandal of the  
Court,  
Sin against Arthur and the Table  
Round,  
And the strange sound of an adulter-  
ous race,  
Across the iron grating of her cell

Beat, and she pray'd and fasted all the more.

"And he to whom she told her sins, or what

Her all but utter whiteness held for sin,

A man wellnigh a hundred winters old,  
Spake often with her of the Holy Grail,  
A legend handed down thro' five or six,  
And each of these a hundred winters old,

From our Lord's time. And when King Arthur made

His Table Round, and all men's hearts became

Clean for a season, surely he had thought

That now the Holy Grail would come again;

But sin broke out. Ah, Christ, that it would come,

And heal the world of all their wickedness!

'O Father!' asked the maiden, 'might it come

To me by prayer and fasting?' 'Nay,' said he,

'I know not, for thy heart is pure as snow.'

And so she pray'd and fasted, till the sun

Shone, and the wind blew, thro' her, and I thought

She might have risen and floated when I saw her,

"For on a day she sent to speak with me.

And when she came to speak, behold her eyes

Beyond my knowing of them, beautiful,

Beyond all knowing of them, wonderful,

Beautiful in the light of holiness.

And 'O my brother, Percivale,' she said,

'Sweet brother, I have seen the Holy Grail:

For, waked at dead of night, I heard a sound

As of a silver horn from o'er the hills blown, and I thought, "It is not

Arthur's use To hunt by moonlight;" and the slender sound

As from a distance beyond distance grew

Coming upon me—O never harp nor horn,

Nor aught we blow with breath, or touch with hand,

Was like that music as it came; and then

Stream'd thro' my cell a cold and silver beam,

And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail,

Rose-red with beatings in it, as if alive,

Till all the white walls of my cell were dyed

With rosy colors leaping on the wall; And then the music faded, and the Grail

Pass'd, and the beam decay'd, and from the walls

The rosy quiverings died into the night.

So now the Holy Thing is here again Among us, brother, fast thou too and pray,

And tell thy brother knights to fast and pray,

That so perchance the vision may be seen

By thee and those, all the world be heal'd.'

"Then leaving the pale nun, I spake of this

To all men; and myself fasted and pray'd

Always, and many among us many a week

Fasted and pray'd even to the uttermost,

Expectant of the wonder that would be.

"And one there was among us, ever moved

Among us in white armor, Galahad, 'God make thee good as thou art beautiful,'

Said Arthur, when he dubb'd him knight; and none,

In so young youth, was ever made a knight

Till Galahad; and this Galahad, when he heard

My sister's vision, fill'd me with amaze; His eyes became so like her own, they seem'd

Hers, and himself her brother more than I.

"Sister or brother none had he; but some

Call'd him a son of Lancelot, and some said

Begotten by enchantment—chatterers they,

Like birds of passage piping up and down,

That gape for flies—we know not whence they come;

For when was Lancelot wanderingly lewd?

"But she, the wan sweet maiden shore away

Clean from her forehead all that wealth of hair

Which made a silken mat-work for her feet;

And out of this she plaited broad and long

A strong sword-belt, and wove with silver thread

And crimson in the belt a strange device,

A crimson grail within a silver beam;  
And saw the bright boy-knight, and bound it on him,

Saying, 'My knight, my love, my knight of heaven,

O thou, my love, whose love is one with mine,

I, maiden, round thee, maiden, bind my belt.

Go forth, for thou shalt see what I have seen,

And break thro' all, till one will crown thee king

Far in the spiritual city: and as she spake

She sent the deathless passion in her eyes

Thro' him, and made him hers, and laid her mind

On him, and he believed in her belief.

"Then came a year of miracle: O brother,

In our great hall there stood a vacant chair,

Fashion'd by Merlin ere he past away,  
And carven with strange figures; and in and out

The figures, like a serpent, ran a scroll  
Of letters in a tongue no man could read.

And Merlin call'd it 'The Siege perilous,'

Perilous for good and ill; 'for there,' he said,

'No man could sit but he should lose himself:'

And once by misadventure Merlin sat  
In his own chair, and so was lost; but he,

Galahad, when he heard of Merlin's doom,

Cried, 'If I lose myself I save myself!'

"Then on a summer night it came to pass,

While the great banquet lay along the hall,

That Galahad would sit down in Merlin's chair.

"And all at once, as there we sat, we heard

A cracking and a riving of the roofs,  
And rending, and a blast, and over-head

Thunder, and in the thunder was a cry.

And in the blast there smote along the hall

A beam of light seven times more clear than day:

And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail

All over cover'd with a luminous cloud,

And none might see who bare it, and it past.

But every knight beheld his fellow's face

As in a glory, and all the knights arose,

And staring each at other like dumb men

Stood, till I found a voice and sware a vow.

"I sware a vow before them all, that I,

Because I had not seen the Grail, would ride

A twelvemonth and a day in quest of it,

Until I found and saw it, as the nun

My sister saw it; and Galahad sware the vow,

And good Sir Bors, our Lancelot's cousin, sware,

And Lancelot sware, and many among the knights,

And Gawain sware, and louder than the rest."

Then spake the monk Ambrosius, asking him,

"What said the King? Did Arthur take the vow?"

"Nay, for my lord," said Percivale, "the king,

Was not in hall: for early that same day,

Scaped thro' a cavern from a bandit hold,

An outraged maiden sprang into the hall

Crying on help: for all her shining hair

Was smear'd with earth, and either milky arm

Red-rent with hooks of bramble, and all she wore

Torn as a sail that leaves the rope is torn

In tempest: so the king arose and went

To smoke the scandalous hive of those wild bees

That made such honey in his realm. Howbeit

Some little of this marvel he too saw, Returning o'er the plain that then

began

To darken under Camelot; whence the king

Look'd up, calling aloud, 'Lo there! the roofs

Of our great hall are rolled in thunder-smoke!

Pray Heaven, they be not smitten by the bolt.'

For dear to Arthur was that hall of ours,

As having there so oft with all his knights

Feasted, and as the stateliest under heaven,

"O brother, had you known our  
mighty hall,  
Which Merlin built for Arthur long  
ago!

For all the sacred mount of Camelot,  
And all the dim rich city, roof by roof,  
Tower after tower, spire beyond spire,  
By grove, and garden-lawn, and rushing  
brook,

Climbs to the mighty hall that Merlin  
built.

And four great zones of sculpture, set  
betwixt

With many a mystic symbol, gird the  
hall:

And in the lowest beasts are slaying  
men,

And in the second men are slaying  
beasts,

And on the third are warriors, perfect  
men,

And on the fourth are men with grow-  
ing wings,

And over all one statue in the mould  
Of Arthur, made by Merlin, with a  
crown,

And peak'd wings pointed to the  
Northern Star.

And eastward fronts the statue, and  
the crown

And both the wings are made of gold,  
and flame

At sunrise till the people in far fields,  
Wasted so often by the heathen hordes,  
Behold it, crying, 'We have still a  
king.'

"And, brother, had you known our  
hall within,  
Broader and higher than any in all  
the lands!

Where twelve great windows blazon  
Arthur's wars.

And all the light that falls upon the  
board

Streams thro' the twelve great battles  
of our King.

Nay, one there is, and at the eastern  
end,

Wealthy with wandering lines of  
mount and mere,

Where Arthur finds the brand, Ex-  
calibur.

And also one to the west, and counter  
to it,

And blank: and who shall blazon it?  
when and how?—

O there perchance, when all our wars  
are, done,

The brand Excalibur will be cast away.

"So to this hall full quickly rode the  
King,

In horror lest the work by Merlin  
wrought,

Dreamlike, should on the sudden van-  
ish, wrapt

In unremorseful folds of rolling fire.  
And in he rode, and up I glanced, and  
saw

The golden dragon sparkling over all:  
And many of those who burnt the hold,  
their arms

Hack'd, and their foreheads grimed  
with smoke, and sear'd,

Follow'd, and in among bright faces,  
ours,

Full of the vision, prest: and then the  
King

Spake to me, being nearest, 'Perci-  
vale,'

(Because the hall was all in tumult—  
some

Vowing, and some protesting), 'what  
is this?'

"O brother, when I told him what  
had chanced,

My sister's vision, and the rest, his  
face

Darken'd, as I have seen it more than  
once,

When some brave deed seem'd to be  
done in vain,

Darken; and 'Woe is me, my knights,'  
he cried,

'Had I been here, ye had not sworn  
the vow.'

Bold was mine answer, 'Had thyself  
been here,

My King, thou wouldst have sworn.'  
'Yea, yea,' said he,

'Art thou so bold and hast not seen  
the Grail?'

"Nay, Lord, I heard the sound, I  
saw the light,

But since I did not see the Holy  
Thing,

I swear a vow to follow it till I saw.'  
'Then when he asked us, knight by

knight, if any  
Had seen it, all their answers were as  
one:

'Nay, Lord, and therefore have we  
sworn our vows.'

"Lo, now,' said Arthur, 'have ye  
seen a cloud?'

What go ye into the wilderness to see?'

"Then Galahad on the sudden, and  
in a voice

Shrilling along the hall to Arthur,  
call'd,

'But I, Sir Arthur, saw the Holy Grail,  
I saw the Holy Grail and heard a cry—

O Galahad, and O Galahad, follow me.'

"Ah, Galahad, Galahad,' said the  
King, 'for such

As thou art is the vision, not for these.  
Thy holy nun and thou have seen a  
sign—

Holier is none, my Percivale, than  
she—

A sign to maim this Order which I  
made.

But you, that follow but the leader's  
bell'

Brother, the King was hard upon his  
 knights)  
 'Taliessin is our fullest throat of song,  
 And one hath sung and all the dumb  
 will sing.  
 Lancelot is Lancelot, and hath over-  
 borne  
 Five knights at once, and every young-  
 er knight,  
 Unproven, holds himself as Lancelot,  
 Till overborne by one, he learns--and ye,  
 What are ye? Galahads?—no, nor Per-  
 cival's'  
 (For thus it pleased the King to range  
 me close  
 After Sir Galahad); 'nay,' said he, 'but  
 men  
 With strength and will to right the  
 wrong'd, of power  
 To lay the sudden heads of violence flat,  
 Knights that in twelve great battles  
 splash'd and dyed  
 The strong White Horse in his own  
 heathen blood—  
 But one hath seen, and all the blind  
 will see.  
 Go, since your vows are sacred, being  
 made :  
 Yet—for ye know the cries of all my  
 realm  
 Pass thro' this hall—how often, O my  
 knights.  
 Your places being vacant at my side,  
 This chance of noble deeds will come  
 and go  
 Unchallenged, while you follow wan-  
 dering fires  
 Lost in the quagmire? Many of you,  
 yea most,  
 Return no more : ye think I show my-  
 self  
 Too dark a prophet : come now, let us  
 meet  
 The morrow morn once more in one full  
 field  
 Of gracious pastime, that once more the  
 King,  
 Before you leave him for this Quest,  
 may count  
 The yet-unbroken strength of all his  
 knights.  
 Rejoicing in that Order which he made.'

"So when the sun broke next from  
 under ground,  
 All the great table of our Arthur closed  
 And clash'd in such a tourney and so  
 full,  
 So many lances broken—never yet  
 Had Camelot seen the like, since Arthur  
 came.  
 And I myself and Galahad, for a  
 strength  
 Was in us from the vision, overthrew  
 So many knights that all the people  
 cried,  
 And almost burst the barriers in their  
 heat,  
 shouting 'Sir Galahad and Sir Perci-  
 vale !'

"But when the next day brake from  
 under ground—  
 O brother, had you known our Camelot,  
 Built by old kings, age after age, so old  
 The King himself had fears that it  
 would fall,  
 So strange, and rich, and dim; for  
 where the roofs  
 Totter'd toward each other in the sky,  
 Met foreheads all along the street of  
 those  
 Who watch'd us pass ; and lower, and  
 where the long  
 Rich galleries, lady-laden, weigh'd the  
 necks  
 Of dragons clinging to the crazy walls,  
 Thicker than drops from thunder,  
 showers of flowers  
 Fell as we past ; and men and boys  
 astride  
 On wyvern, lion, dragon, griffin, swan,  
 At all the corners, nam'd us each by  
 name,  
 Calling 'God speed !' but in the street  
 below  
 The knights and ladies wept, and rich  
 and poor  
 Wept, and the King himself could  
 hardly speak  
 For grief, and in the middle street the  
 Queen,  
 Who rode by Lancelot, wail'd and  
 shriek'd aloud,  
 'This madness has come on us for our  
 sins.'  
 And then we reach'd the weirdly-sculp-  
 tured gate,  
 Where Arthur's wars were render'd  
 mystically,  
 And thence departed every one his  
 way.

"And I was lifted up in heart, and  
 thought  
 Of all my late-shown prowess in the  
 lists,  
 How my strong lance had beaten  
 down the knights,  
 So many and famous names ; and never  
 yet  
 Had heaven appear'd so blue, nor earth  
 so green,  
 For all my blood danced in me, and I  
 knew  
 That I should light upon the Holy  
 Grail.

"Thereafter, the dark warning of our  
 King,  
 That most of us would follow wander-  
 ing fires,  
 Came like a driving gloom across my  
 mind.  
 Then every evil word I had spoken  
 once,  
 And every evil thought I had thought  
 of old,  
 And every evil deed I ever did,  
 Awoke and cried, 'This Quest is not for  
 thee.'

And lifting up mine eyes, I found myself  
Alone, and in a land of sand and thorns,  
And I was thirsty even unto death ;  
And I, too, cried, ' This Quest is not for thee."

" And on I rode, and when I thought my thirst  
Would slay me, saw deep lawns, and then a brook,  
With one sharp rapid, where the crisp-  
ing white  
Play'd ever back upon the sloping wave,  
And took both ear and eye ; and o'er the brook  
Were apple-trees, and apples by the brook  
Fallen, and on the lawns. ' I will rest here.'  
I said, ' I am not worthy of the Quest ;'  
But even while I drank the brook, and ate  
The goodly apples, all these things at once  
Fell into dust, and I was left alone,  
And thirsting, in a land of sand and thorns.

" And then behold a woman at a door  
Spinning ; and fair the house whereby she sat,  
And kind the woman's eyes and innocent,  
And all her bearing gracious ; and she rose  
Opening her arms to meet me, as who should say,  
' Rest here ;' but when I touched her, lo ! she, too,  
Fell into dust and nothing, and the house  
Became no better than a broken shed,  
And in it a dead babe ; and also this  
Fell into dust, and I was left alone

" And on I rode, and greater was my thirst.  
Then flash'd a yellow gleam across the world,  
And where it smote the ploughshare in the field,  
The ploughman left his ploughing, and fell down  
Before it ; where it glitter'd on her pail,  
The milkmaid left her milking, and fell down  
Before it, and I knew not why, but thought  
' The sun is rising,' tho' the sun had risen.  
Then was I ware of one that on me moved  
In golden armor with a crown of gold  
About a casque all jewels ; and his horse  
In golden armor jewell'd everywhere ;  
And on the splendor came, flashing me blind ;

And seem'd to me the Lord of all the world,  
Being so huge. But when I thought he meant  
To crush me, moving on me, lo ! he, too,  
Opened his arms to embrace me as he came,  
And up I went and touch'd him, and he, too,  
Fell into dust, and I was left alone  
And wearying in a land of sand and thorns.

" And I rode on and found a mighty hill,  
And on the top, a city wall'd : the spires  
Prick'd with incredible pinnacles into heaven.  
And by the gateway stirr'd a crowd ; and these  
Cried to me climbing, ' Welcome, Percivale !  
Thou mightiest and thou purest among men !'  
And glad was I and clomb, but found at top  
No man, nor any voice. And thence I past  
Far thro' a ruinous city, and I saw  
That man had once dwelt there ; but there I found  
Only one man of an exceeding age.  
' Where is that goodly company,' said I,  
' That so cried out upon me ?' and he had  
Scarce any voice to answer, and yet gasp'd  
' Whence and what art thou !' and even as he spoke  
Fell into dust, and disappear'd, and I  
Was left alone once more, and cried in grief,  
' Lo, if I find the Holy Grail itself  
And touch it, it will crumble into dust.'

" And thence I dropt into a holy vale,  
Low as the hill was high, and where the vale  
Was lowest, found a chapel and thereby  
A holy hermit in a hermitage,  
To whom I told my phantoms, and he said :

" ' O son, thou hast not true humility,  
The highest virtue, mother of them all ;  
For when the Lord of all things made Himself  
Naked of glory for His mortal change,  
' Take thou my robe,' she said, ' for all is thine,'  
And all her form shone forth with sudden light  
So that the angels were amazed, and she  
Follow'd him down, and like a flying star  
Led on the gray-hair'd wisdom of the east ;  
But her thou hast not known : for what is this

Thou thoughtest of thy prowess and thy  
 sins ?  
 Thou hast not lost thyself to save thy-  
 self  
 As Galahad.' When the hermit made  
 an end,  
 In silver armor suddenly Galahad  
 shone  
 Before us, and against the chapel door  
 Laid lance, and enter'd, and we knelt  
 in prayer.  
 And there the hermit slaked my burn-  
 ing thirst  
 And at the sacring of the mass I saw  
 The holy elements alone ; but he :  
 'Saw ye no more ? I, Galahad, saw the  
 Grail,  
 The Holy Grail, descend upon the  
 shrine :  
 I saw the fiery face as of a child  
 That smote itself into the bread, and  
 went ;  
 And hither am I come ; and never yet  
 Hath what thy sister taught me first to  
 see,  
 This Holy Thing, fail'd from my side,  
 nor come  
 Cover'd, but moving with me night and  
 day,  
 Fainter by day, but always in the night  
 Blood-red, and sliding down the black-  
 en'd marsh  
 Blood-red, and on the naked mountain  
 top  
 Blood-red, and in the sleeping mere be-  
 low  
 Blood-red. And in the strength of this  
 I rode,  
 Shattering all evil customs everywhere,  
 And past thro' Pagan realms, and made  
 them mine,  
 And clash'd with Pagan hordes, and  
 bore them down,  
 And brake thro' all, and in the strength  
 of this  
 Come victor. But my time is hard at  
 hand,  
 And hence I go ; and one will crown me  
 king  
 Far in the spiritual city, and come thou,  
 too,  
 For thou shalt see the vision when I go.'

" While thus he spake, his eye, dwell-  
 ing on mine,  
 Drew me, with power upon me, till I  
 grew  
 One with him, to believe as he believed.  
 Then, when the day began to wane, we  
 went.

" There rose a hill that none but man  
 could climb,  
 Scarr'd with a hundred wintry water-  
 courses—  
 Storm at the top, and when we gain'd  
 it, storm  
 Round us and death ; for every moment  
 glanced  
 His silver arms and gloom'd : so quick  
 and thick

The lightnings here and there to left  
 and right  
 Struck, till the dry old trunks about us,  
 dead,  
 Yea, rotten with a hundred years of  
 death,  
 Sprang into fire : and at the base we  
 found  
 On either hand, as far as eye could see,  
 A great black swamp and of an evil  
 smell,  
 Part black, part whiten'd with the bones  
 of men,  
 Not to be crost, save that some ancient  
 king  
 Had built a way, where, link'd with  
 many a bridge,  
 A thousand piers ran into the great sea.  
 And Galahad fled along them bridge by  
 bridge,  
 And every bridge as quickly as he crost  
 Sprang into fire and vanish'd, tho' I  
 yearn'd  
 To follow ; and thrice above him all  
 the heavens  
 Open'd and blazed with thunder such  
 as seem'd  
 Shoutings of all the sons of God : and  
 first  
 At once I saw him far on the great sea,  
 In silver-shining armor starry-clear ;  
 And o'er his head the holy vessel hung  
 Clothed in white samite or a luminous  
 cloud.  
 And with exceeding swiftness ran the  
 boat  
 If boat it were—I saw not whence it  
 came.  
 And when the heavens open'd and  
 blazed again  
 Roaring, I saw him like a silver star—  
 And had he set the sail, or had the boat  
 Become a living creature clad with  
 wings ?  
 And o'er his head the holy vessel hung  
 Redder than any rose, a joy to me,  
 For now I knew the veil had been with-  
 drawn.  
 Then in a moment when they blazed  
 again  
 Opening, I saw the least of little stars  
 Down on the waste, and straight beyond  
 the star  
 I saw the spiritual city and all her spires  
 And gateways in a glory like one pearl—  
 No larger, tho' the goal of all the saints—  
 Strike from the sea ; and from the star  
 there shot  
 A rose-red sparkle to the city, and there  
 Dwelt, and I knew it was the Holy Grail,  
 Which never eyes on earth again shall  
 see.  
 Then fell the floods of heaven drown-  
 ing the deep.  
 And how my feet recross'd the death-  
 ful ridge  
 No memory in me lives ; but that I  
 touch'd  
 The chapel-doors at dawn I know ; and  
 thence

Taking my war-horse from the holy  
man,  
Glad that no phantom vexed me more,  
return'd  
To whence I came, the gate of Arthur's  
wars."

"O brother," ask'd Ambrosius,—  
"for in sooth  
These ancient books—and they would  
win thee—teem,  
Only I find not there this Holy Grail,  
With miracles and marvels like to  
these,  
Not all unlike; which oftentime I read,  
Who read but on my breviary with ease,  
Till my head swims; and then go forth  
and pass  
Down to the little thorpe that lies so  
close,  
And almost plaster'd like a martin's  
nest  
To these old walls—and mingle with  
our folk;  
And knowing every honest face of  
theirs,  
As well as ever shepherd knew his  
sheep,  
And every homely secret in their  
hearts,  
Delight myself with gossip and old  
wives,  
And ills and aches, and teething, ly-  
ings-in,  
And mirthful sayings, children of the  
place,  
That have no meaning half a league  
away:  
Or lulling random squabbles when they  
rise,  
Chaffings and chatterings at the mar-  
ket-cross,  
Rejoice, small man, in this small world  
of mine,  
Yea, even in their hens and in their  
eggs—  
O brother, saying this Sir Galahad  
Came ye on none but phantoms in your  
quest,  
No man, no woman?"

Then, Sir Percivale:  
"All men, to one so bound by such a  
vow,  
And women were as phantoms. O, my  
brother,  
Why wilt thou shame me to confess to  
thee  
How far I falter'd from my quest and  
vow?  
For after I had lain so many nights  
A bedmate of the snail and eel and  
snake,  
In grass and burdock, I was changed to  
wan  
And meagre, and the vision had not  
come,  
And then I chanced upon a goodly town  
With one great dwelling in the middle  
of it;

Thither I made, and there was I dis-  
arm'd  
By maidens each as fair as any flower:  
But when they led me into hall, behold  
The Princess of that castle was the one,  
Brother, and that one only, who had  
ever  
Made my heart leap; for when I moved  
of old  
A slender page about her father's hall.  
And she a slender maiden, all my heart  
Went after her with longing: yet we  
twain  
Had never kiss'd a kiss, or vow'd a  
vow.  
And now I came upon her once again,  
And one had wedded her, and he was  
dead,  
And all his land and wealth and state  
were hers.  
And while I tarried, every day she set  
A banquet richer than the day before  
By me; for all her longing and her  
will  
Was toward me as of old; till one fair  
morn,  
I walking to and fro beside a stream  
That flash'd across her orchard under-  
neath  
Her castle-walls, she stole upon my  
walk,  
And calling me the greatest of all  
knights,  
Embraced me, and so kiss'd me the  
first time,  
And gave herself and all her wealth to  
me.  
Then I remember'd Arthur's warning  
word,  
That most of us would follow wander-  
ing fires,  
And the Quest faded in my heart.  
anon,  
The heads of all her people drew to  
me,  
With supplication both of knees and  
tongue:  
'We have heard of thee: thou art our  
greatest knight,  
Our Lady says it, and we well believe:  
Wed thou our Lady, and rule over us,  
And thou shalt be as Arthur in our  
land.'  
O me, my brother! but one night my  
vow  
Burnt me within, so that I rose and  
fled,  
But wail'd and wept, and hated mine  
own self,  
And ev'n the Holy Quest, and all but  
her;  
Then after I was join'd with Galahad  
Cared not for her, nor anything upon  
earth."

Then said the monk, "Poor men,  
when yule is cold,  
Must be content to sit by little fires.  
And this am I, so that ye care for me  
Evers so little; yea, and blest be heaven

That brought thee here to this poor  
house of ours,  
Where all the brethren are so hard, to  
warm  
My cold heart with a friend : but O the  
pity  
To find thine own first love once more  
—to hold,  
Hold her a wealthy bride within thine  
arms,  
Or all but hold, and then—cast her  
aside,  
Foregoing all her sweetness, like a  
weed.  
For we that want the warmth of double  
life,  
We that are plagued with dreams of  
something sweet  
Beyond all sweetness in a life so rich,—  
Ah, blessed Lord, I speak too earthly-  
wise.  
Seeing I never stray'd beyond the cell,  
But live like an old badger in his earth,  
With earth about him everywhere, de-  
spite  
All fast and penance. Saw ye none  
beside,  
None of your knights?"

"Yea so," said Percivale :  
'One night my pathway swerving east,  
I saw  
The pelican on the casque of our Sir  
Bors  
All in the middle of the rising moon :  
And toward him spur'd and hail'd  
him, and he me,  
And each made joy of either ; then he  
ask'd,  
'Where is he? hast thou seen him—  
Lancelot?' 'Once,'  
Said good Sir Bors, 'he dash'd across  
me—mad,  
And maddening what he rode : and  
when I cried,  
"Ridest thou then so hotly on a quest  
So hotly?" Lancelot shouted, "Stay  
me not !  
I have been the sluggard, and I ride  
apace,  
For now there is a lion in the way."  
So vanish'd.'

"Then Sir Bors had ridden on  
Softly, and sorrowing for our Lancelot,  
Because his former madness, once the  
talk  
And scandal of our table, had re-  
turn'd ;  
For Lancelot's kith and kin so worship  
him  
That ill to him is ill to them ; to Bors  
Beyond the rest : he well had been  
content  
Not to have seen, so Lancelot might  
have seen,  
The Holy Cup of healing ; and, indeed,  
Being so clouded with his grief and  
love,  
Small heart was his after the Holy  
Quest :

If God would send the vision, well : if  
not,  
The Quest and he were in the hands of  
heaven.

"And then, with small adventure  
met, Sir Bors  
Rode to the lonest tract of all the  
realm,  
And found a people there among their  
crag,  
Our race and blood, a remnant that  
were left  
Paynim amid their circles, and the  
stones  
They pitch up straight to heaven ; and  
their wise men  
Were strong in that old magic which  
can trace  
The wandering of the stars, and scoff'd  
at him  
At this high Quest as at a simple  
thing :  
Told him he follow'd—almost Arthur's  
words—  
A mocking fire : 'what other fire than  
he,  
Whereby the blood bents, and the  
blossom blows,  
And the sea rolls, and all the world is  
warm'd ?'  
And when his answer chafed them, the  
rough crowd,  
Hearing he had a difference with their  
priests,  
Seized him, and bound and plunged  
him into a cell  
Of great piled stones ; and lying  
bounden there  
In darkness thro' innumerable hours  
He heard the hollow-ringing heavens  
sweep  
Over him, till by miracle—what else ?—  
Heavy as it was, a great stone slipt and  
fell,  
Such as no wind could move : and  
thro' the gap  
Glimmer'd the streaming scud : then  
came a night  
Still as the day was loud ; and thro'  
the gap  
The seven clear stars of Arthur's Table  
Round—  
For, brother, so one night, because  
they roll  
Thro' such around in heaven, we named  
the stars,  
Rejoicing in ourselves and in our king—  
And these, like bright eyes of familiar  
friends,  
In on him shone, 'And then to me, to  
me,'  
Said good Sir Bors, 'beyond all hopes  
of mine,  
Who scarce had pray'd or ask'd it for  
myself—  
Across the seven clear stars—O grace  
to me—  
In color like the fingers of a hand  
Before a burning taper, the sweet Grail

Glided and past, and close upon it  
 peal'd  
 A sharp quick thunder.' Afterwards  
 a maid,  
 Who kept our holy faith among her kin  
 In secret, entering, loosed and let him  
 go."

To whom the monk: "And I remem-  
 ber now  
 That pelican on the casque. Sir Bors  
 it was  
 Who spake so low and sadly at our  
 board;  
 And mighty reverent at our grace was  
 he:  
 A square-set man and honest; and his  
 eyes,  
 An out-door sign of all the warmth  
 within.  
 Smiled with his lips—a smile beneath  
 a cloud,  
 But heaven had meant it for a sunny  
 one:  
 Ay, ay, Sir Bors, who else? But when  
 ye reach'd  
 The city, found ye all your knights re-  
 turn'd,  
 Or was there sooth in Arthur's pro-  
 phecy,  
 Tell me, and what said each, and what  
 the King?"

Then answer'd Percivale: "And  
 that can I,  
 Brother, and truly; since the living  
 words  
 Of so great men as Lancelot and our  
 King  
 Pass not from door to door and out  
 again,  
 But sit within the house. O, when we  
 reach'd  
 The city, our horses stumbling as they  
 trode  
 On heaps of ruin, hornless unicorns,  
 Crack'd basilisks, and splinter'd cock-  
 atrices,  
 And shatter'd talbots, which had left  
 the stones  
 Raw, that they fell from, brought us to  
 the hall.

"And there sat Arthur on the dai-  
 throne,  
 And those that had gone out upon the  
 Quest,  
 Wasted and worn, and but a tithe of  
 them,  
 And those that had not, stood before  
 the King.  
 Who, when he saw me, rose, and bade  
 me hail,  
 Saying, 'A welfare in thine eye re-  
 proves  
 Our fear of some disastrous chance for  
 thee  
 On hill, or plain, at sea, or flooding  
 ford.  
 So fierce a gale made havoc here of  
 late

Among the strange devices of our  
 kings;  
 Yea, shook this newer, stronger hall of  
 ours,  
 And from the statue Merlin moulded  
 for us  
 Half-wrench'd a golden wing; but now  
 —the quest,  
 This vision—hast thou seen the Holy  
 Cup,  
 That Joseph brought of old to Glaston-  
 bury?"

"So when I told him all thyself hast  
 heard,  
 Ambrosius, and my fresh but fixt re-  
 solve  
 To pass away into the quiet life,  
 He answer'd not, but, sharply turning,  
 ask'd  
 Of Gawain, 'Gawain, was this Quest  
 for thee?'

"'Nay, lord,' said Gawain, 'not for  
 such as I.  
 Therefore I communed with a saintly  
 man,  
 Who made me sure the Quest was not  
 for me;  
 For I was much aweared of the  
 Quest:  
 But found a silk pavilion in a field,  
 And merry maidens in it; and then  
 this gale  
 Tore my pavilion from the tenting-pin,  
 And blew my merry maidens all about  
 With all discomfort; yea, and but for  
 this,  
 My twelvemonth and a day were pleas-  
 ant to me.'

"He ceased; and Arthur turn'd to  
 whom at first  
 He saw not, for Sir Bors, on entering,  
 push'd  
 Athwart the throng to Lancelot, caught  
 his hand,  
 Held it, and there, half-hidden by him,  
 stood,  
 Until the King espied him, saying to  
 him,  
 'Hail, Bors! if ever loyal man and  
 true  
 Could see it, thou hast seen the Grail;'  
 and Bors,  
 'Ask me not, for I may not speak of it,  
 I saw it:' and the tears were in his  
 eyes."

"Then there remain'd but Lancelot,  
 for the rest  
 Spake but of sundry perils in the  
 storm;  
 Perhaps, like him of Cana in Holy  
 Writ.  
 Our Arthur kept his best until the last;  
 'Thou, too, my Lancelot,' ask'd the  
 King, 'my friend,  
 Our mightiest, hath this Quest avail'd  
 for thee?'

"Our mightiest," answer'd Lance-  
 lot, with a groan;  
 O King!—and when he paused, me-  
 thought I spied  
 A dying fire of madness in his eyes—  
 'O King, my friend, if friend of thine  
 I be,  
 Happier are those that welter in their  
 sin,  
 Swine in the mud, that cannot see for  
 slime,  
 Slime of the ditch: but in me lived a  
 sin  
 So strange, of such a kind, that all of  
 pure,  
 Noble, and knightly in me twined and  
 clung  
 Round that one sin, until the whole-  
 some flower  
 And poisonous grew together, each as  
 each,  
 Not to be pluck'd asunder; and when  
 thy knights  
 Swore, I swore with them only in the  
 hope  
 That could I touch or see the Holy  
 Grail  
 They might be pluck'd asunder. Then  
 I spake  
 To one most holy saint, who wept and  
 said,  
 That save they could be pluck'd asun-  
 der, all  
 My quest were but in vain; to whom I  
 vow'd  
 That I would work according as he  
 will'd.  
 And forth I went, and while I yearn'd  
 and strove  
 To tear the twain asunder in my heart,  
 My madness came upon me as of old,  
 And whipt me into waste fields far  
 away;  
 There was I beaten down by little men,  
 Mean knights, to whom the moving of  
 my sword  
 And shadow of my spear had been enow  
 To scare them from me once; and then  
 I came  
 All in my folly to the naked shore,  
 Wide flats, where nothing but coarse  
 grasses grew;  
 But such a blast, my King, began to  
 blow,  
 So loud a blast along the shore and  
 sea,  
 Ye could not hear the waters for the  
 blast,  
 Tho' heapt in mounds and ridges all  
 the sea  
 Drove like a cataract, and all the sand  
 Swept like a river, and the clouded  
 heavens  
 Were shaken with the motion and the  
 sound.  
 And blackening in the sea-foam sway'd  
 a boat,  
 Half-swallow'd in it, anchor'd with a  
 chain;  
 And in my madness to myself I said

"I will embark and I will lose myself  
 And in the great sea wash away my sin.  
 I burst the chain, I sprang into the  
 boat.  
 Seven days I drove along the dreary  
 deep,  
 And with me drove the moon and all  
 the stars;  
 And the wind fell, and on the seventh  
 night  
 I heard the shingle grinding in the  
 surge,  
 And felt the boat shock earth, and  
 looking up,  
 Behold, the enchanted towers of Car-  
 bonek,  
 A castle like a rock upon a rock,  
 With chasm-like portals open to the  
 sea,  
 And steps that met the breaker! there  
 was none  
 Stood near it but a lion on each side  
 That kept the entry, and the moon was  
 full.  
 Then from the boat I leapt, and up the  
 stairs.  
 There drew my sword. With sudden-  
 flaring manes  
 Those two great beasts rose upright  
 like a man,  
 Each gript a shoulder, and I stood be-  
 tween;  
 And, when I would have smitten them,  
 heard a voice,  
 "Doubt not, go forward; if thou  
 doubt, the beasts  
 Will tear thee piecemeal." Then with  
 violence  
 The sword was dash'd from out my  
 hand, and fell.  
 And up into the sounding hall I past;  
 But nothing in the sounding hall I saw  
 No bench nor table, painting on the  
 wall  
 Or shield of knight; only the rounded  
 moon  
 Thro' the tall oriel on the rolling sea.  
 But always in the quiet house I heard,  
 Clear as a lark, high o'er me as a lark,  
 A sweet voice singing in the topmost  
 tower  
 To the eastward: up I climb'd a thou-  
 sand steps  
 With pain: as in dream I seem'd to  
 climb  
 For ever: at the last I reach'd a door,  
 A light was in the crannies, and I  
 heard,  
 "Glory and joy and honor to our Lord  
 And to the Holy Vessel of the Grail."  
 Then in my madness I essay'd the  
 door:  
 It gave; and thro' a stormy glare, a  
 heat  
 As from a seventimes-heated furnace,  
 I,  
 Blasted and burnt, and blinded as I  
 was,  
 With such a fierceness that I swoon'd  
 away—

O, yet methought I saw the Holy Grail,  
 All pall'd in crimson samite, and  
 around  
 Great angels, awful shapes, and wings  
 and eyes.  
 And but for all my madness and my  
 sin,  
 And then my swooning, I had sworn I  
 saw  
 That which I saw; but what I saw was  
 veil'd  
 And cover'd; and this quest was not  
 for me.'

"So speaking, and here ceasing,  
 Lancelot left  
 The hall long silent, till Sir Gawain—  
 nay,  
 Brother, I need not tell thee foolish  
 words,—  
 A reckless and irreverent knight was  
 he,  
 Now bolden'd by the silence of his  
 King,—  
 Well, I will tell thee: 'O king, my  
 liege,' he said,  
 'Hath Gawain fail'd in any quest of  
 thine?  
 When have I stinted stroke in foughten  
 field?  
 But as for thine, my good friend, Per-  
 cival,  
 Thy holy nun and thou have driven  
 men mad,  
 Yea, made our mightiest madder than  
 our least.  
 But by mine eyes and by mine ears I  
 swear,  
 I will be deafer than the blue-eyed cat,  
 And thrice as blind as any noonday  
 owl,  
 The holy virgins in their ecstasies,  
 Henceforward.'

"'Deafer,' said the blameless King,  
 'Gawain, and blinder unto holy things  
 Hope not to make thyself by idle vows,  
 Being too blind to have desire to see.  
 But if indeed there came a sign from  
 heaven,  
 Blessed are Bors, Lancelot, and Perci-  
 val,  
 For these have seen according to their  
 sight.  
 For every fiery prophet in old times,  
 And all the sacred madness of the  
 bard,  
 When God made music thro' them,  
 could but speak  
 His music by the framework and the  
 chord;  
 And as ye saw it ye have spoken truth.

"'Nay—but thou errest, Lancelot:  
 never yet  
 Could all of true and noble in knight  
 and man  
 Twine round one sin, whatever it might  
 be,  
 With such a closeness, but apart there  
 grew.

Save that he were the swine thou  
 spakest of,  
 Some root of knighthood and pure  
 nobleness:  
 Whereto see thou, that it may bear its  
 flower.

"'And spake I not too truly, O my  
 knights?  
 Was I too dark a prophet when I said  
 To those who went upon the Holy  
 Quest,  
 That most of them would follow wan-  
 dering fires,  
 Lost in the quagmire?—lost to me and  
 gone,  
 And left me gazing at a barren board,  
 And a lean Order—scarce return'd a  
 tithe—  
 And out of those to whom the vision  
 came  
 My greatest hardly will believe he  
 saw;  
 Another hath beheld it afar off,  
 And leaving human wrongs to right  
 themselves,  
 Cares but to pass into the silent life.  
 And one hath had the vision face to  
 face,  
 And now his chair desires him here in  
 vain,  
 However they may crown him other-  
 where.

"And some among you held, that if  
 the King  
 Had seen the sight he would have  
 sworn the vow:  
 Not easily, seeing that the King must  
 guard  
 That which he rules, and is but as the  
 hind  
 To whom a space of land is given to  
 plough,  
 Who may not wander from the allotted  
 field,  
 Before his work be done; but, being  
 done,  
 Let visions of the night or of the day  
 Come, as they will; and many a time  
 they come,  
 Until this earth he walks on seems  
 not earth,  
 This light that strikes his eyeball is  
 not light,  
 This air that smites his forehead is  
 not air  
 But vision—yea, his very hand and  
 foot—  
 In moments when he feels he cannot  
 die,  
 And knows himself no vision to him-  
 self,  
 Nor the high God a vision, nor that  
 One  
 Who rose again: ye have seen what ye  
 have seen.'

"So spake the king: I knew not all  
 he meant."

PELLEAS AND ETIARRE.

KING ARTHUR made new knights to  
fill the gap  
Left by the Holy Quest; and as he sat  
In hall at old Caerleon, the high doors  
Were softly sunder'd, and thro' these  
a youth,  
Pelleas, and the sweet smell of the  
fields  
Past, and the sunshine came along  
with him.

"Make me thy knight, because I  
know, Sir King,  
All that belongs to knighthood, and I  
love."  
Such was his cry; for having heard  
the King  
Had let proclaim a tournament—the  
prize  
A golden circlet and a knightly sword,  
Full fain had Pelleas for his lady won  
The golden circlet, for himself the  
sword:  
And there were those who knew him  
near the King  
And promised for him: and Arthur  
made him knight.

And this new knight, Sir Pelleas of  
the isles—  
But lately come to his inheritance,  
And lord of many a barren isle was  
he—  
Riding at noon, a day or twain before,  
Across the forest call'd of Dean, to  
find  
Caerleon and the King, had felt the  
sun  
Beat like a strong knight on his helm,  
and reel'd  
Almost to falling from his horse; but  
saw  
Near him a mound of even-sloping  
side,  
Whereon a hundred stately beeches  
grew,  
And here and there great hollies under  
them.  
But for a mile all round was open  
space,  
And fern and heath: and slowly Pel-  
leas drew  
To that dim day, then binding his  
good horse  
To a tree, cast himself down; and as  
he lay  
At random looking over the brown  
earth  
Thro' that green-glooming twilight of  
the grove,  
It seem'd to Pelleas that the fern  
without  
Burnt as a living fire of emeralds,  
So that his eyes were dazzled looking  
at it.  
Then o'er it crost the dimness of a  
cloud

Floating, and once the shadow of a  
bird  
Flying, and then a fawn; and his eyes  
closed.  
And since he loved all maidens, but  
no maid  
In special, half-awake he whisper'd.  
"Where?"  
O where? I love thee, tho' I know  
thee not,  
For fair thou art and pure as Guine-  
vere,  
And I will make thee with my spear  
and sword  
As famous—O my queen, my Guine-  
vere,  
For I will be thine Arthur when we  
meet."

Suddenly waken'd with a sound or  
talk  
And laughter at the limit of the wood,  
And glancing thro' the hoary boles, he  
saw,  
Strange as to some old prophet might  
have seem'd  
A vision hovering on a sea of fire,  
Damsels in divers colors like the cloud  
Of sunset and sunrise, and all of them  
On horses, and the horses richly trapt  
Breast-high in that bright line of  
bracken stood:  
And all the damsels talk'd confusedly,  
And one was pointing this way, and  
one that,  
Because the way was lost.

And Pelleas rose,  
And loosed his horse, and led him to  
the light.  
There she that seem'd the chief among  
them said,  
"In happy time behold our pilot-star!  
Youth, we are damsels-errant, and we  
ride,  
Arm'd as ye see, to tilt against the  
knights  
There at Caerleon, but have lost our  
way:  
To right? to left? straightforward?  
back again?  
Which? tell us quickly."  
And Pelleas gazing thought,  
"Is Guinevere herself so beautiful?"  
For large her violet eyes look'd, and  
her bloom  
A rosy dawn kindled in stainless  
heavens,  
And round her limbs, mature in  
womanhood,  
And slender was her hand and small  
her shape,  
And but for those large eyes, the  
haunts of scorn,  
She might have seem'd a toy to trifle  
with,  
And pass and care no more. But  
while he gazed  
The beauty of her flesh abash'd the  
boy

As tho' it were the beauty of her soul :  
 For as the base man, judging of the  
     good,  
 Puts his own baseness in him by de-  
     fault  
 Of will and nature, so did Pelleas lend  
 All the young beauty of his own soul  
     to hers,  
 Believing her ; and when she spake to  
     him,  
 Stammer'd, and could not make her a  
     reply.  
 For out of the waste islands had he  
     come,  
 Where saving his own sisters he had  
     known  
 Scarce any but the women of his isles,  
 Rough wives, that laugh'd and  
     scream'd against the gulls,  
 Makers of nets, and living from the  
     sea.

Then with a slow smile turn'd the  
     lady round  
 And look'd upon her people ; and as  
     when  
 A stone is flung into some sleeping  
     tarn,  
 The circle widens till it lip the marge,  
 Spread the slow smile thro' all her  
     company.  
 Three knights were thereamong ; and  
     they too smiled,  
 Scorning him ; for the lady was Et-  
     tarre,  
 And she was a great lady in her land.

Again she said, "O wild and of the  
     woods,  
 Knowest thou not the fashion of our  
     speech ?  
 Or have the Heavens but given thee a  
     fair face,  
 Lacking a tongue ?"

"O damsel," answer'd he,  
 "I woke from dreams ; and coming  
     out of gloom  
 Was dazzled by the sudden light, and  
     crave  
 Pardon : but will ye to Caerleon ? I  
 Go likewise : shall I lead you to the  
     King ?"

"Lead then," she said ; and thro'  
     the woods they went.  
 And while they rode, the meaning in  
     his eyes,  
 His tenderness of manner, and chaste  
     awe,  
 His broken utterance and bashfulness,  
 Were all a burthen to her, and in her  
     heart  
 She mutter'd, "I have lighted on a  
     fool,  
 Raw, yet so stale !" But since her  
     mind was bent  
 On hearing, after trumpet blown, her  
     name  
 And title, "Queen of Beauty," in the  
     lists

Cried—and beholding him so strong,  
     she thought  
 That peradventure he will fight for  
     me,  
 And win the circlet : therefore flatter'd  
     him,  
 Being so gracious, that he wellnigh  
     deem'd  
 His wish by hers was echo'd ; and her  
     knights  
 And all her damsels too were gracious  
     to him,  
 For she was a great lady.

And when they reach'd  
 Caerleon, ere they past to lodging,  
     she,  
 Taking his hand, "O the strong hand,"  
     she said,  
 "See ! look at mine ! but wilt thou  
     fight for me,  
 And win me this fine circlet, Pelleas,  
 That I may love thee ?"

Then his helpless heart  
 Leapt, and he cried "Ay ! wilt thou if  
     I win ?"  
 "Ay, that will I," she answer'd, and  
     she laugh'd,  
 And straitly nipt the hand, and flung  
     it from her ;  
 Then glanced askew at those three  
     knights of hers,  
 Till all her ladies laugh'd along with  
     her.

"O happy world," thought Pelleas,  
 "all, meseems,  
 Are happy ; I the happiest of them  
     all ;"  
 Nor slept that night for pleasure in  
     his blood,  
 And green wood-ways, and eyes among  
     the leaves ;  
 Then being on the morrow knighted,  
     sware  
 To love one only. And as he came  
     away,  
 The men who met him rounded on  
     their heels  
 And wonder'd after him, because his  
     face  
 Shone like the countenance of a priest  
     of old  
 Against the flame about a sacrifice  
 Kindled by fire from heaven : so glad  
     was he

Then Arthur made vast banquets,  
     and strange knights  
 From the four winds came in : and  
     each one sat,  
 Tho' served with choice from air, land,  
     stream, and sea,  
 Oft in mid-banquet measuring with  
     his eyes  
 His neighbor's make and might : and  
     Pelleas look'd  
 Noble among the noble, for he  
     dream'd

His lady loved him, and he knew  
himself  
Loved of the King : and him his new-  
made knight  
Worshipt, whose lightest whisper  
moved him more  
Than all the ranged reasons of the  
world.

Then blush'd and brake the morning  
of the jousts,  
And this was call'd "The Tournament  
of Youth :"  
For Arthur, loving his young knight,  
withheld  
His older and his mightier from the  
lists,  
That Pelleas might obtain his lady's  
love,  
According to her promise, and remain  
Lord of the tourney. And Arthur  
had the jousts  
Down in the flat field by the shore of  
Usk  
Holden: the gilded parapets were  
crown'd  
With faces, and the great tower fill'd  
with eyes  
Up to the summit, and the trumpets  
blew.  
There all day long Sir Pelleas kept the  
field  
With honor: so by that strong hand  
of his  
The sword and golden circlet were  
achieved.

Then rang the shout his lady loved :  
the heat  
Of pride and glory fired her face ; her  
eye  
Sparkled ; she caught the circlet from  
his lance,  
And there before the people crown'd  
herself.  
So for the last time she was gracious  
to him.

Then at Caerleon for a space—her  
look  
Bright for all others, cloudier on her  
knight—  
Linger'd Ettarre : and seeing Pelleas  
droop,  
Said Guinevere, "We marvel at thee  
much,  
O damsel, wearing this unsunny face  
To him who won thee glory !" And  
she said,  
"Had ye not held your Lancelot in  
your bower,  
My Queen, he had not won." Whereat  
the Queen,  
As one whose foot is bitten by an ant,  
Glanced down upon her, turn'd and  
went her way.

But after, when her damsels, and  
herself,  
And those three knights all set their  
faces home,

Sir Pelleas follow'd. She that saw  
him cried,  
"Damsels—and yet I should be shamed  
to say it—  
I cannot bide Sir Baby. Keep him  
back  
Among yourselves. Would rather that  
we had  
Some rough old knight who knew the  
worldly way,  
Albeit grizzlier than a bear, to ride  
And jest with : take him to you, keep  
him off,  
And pamper him with papmeat, if ye  
will,  
Old milky fables of the wolf and sheep,  
Such as the wholesome mothers tell  
their boys.  
Nay should ye try him with a merry  
one  
To find his mettle, good : and if he fly  
us,  
Small matter ! let him." This her  
damsels heard,  
And mindful of her small and cruel  
hand,  
They, closing round him thro' the  
journey home,  
Acted her hest, and always from her  
side  
Restrain'd him with all manner of  
device,  
So that he could not come to speech  
with her.  
And when she gain'd her castle, up-  
sprang the bridge,  
Down rang the grate of iron thro' the  
groove,  
And he was left alone in open field.

"These be the ways of ladies," Pel-  
leas thought,  
"To those who love them, trials of  
our faith.  
Yea, let her prove me to the utter-  
most,  
For loyal to the uttermost am I."  
So made his moan ; and, darkness fall-  
ing, sought  
A priory not far off, there lodged, but  
rose  
With morning every day, and, moist  
or dry,  
Full-arm'd upon his charger all day  
long  
Sat by the walls, and no one open'd to  
him.

And this persistence turn'd her scorn  
to wrath.  
Then calling her three knights, she  
charged them, "Out !  
And drive him from the walls." And  
out they came,  
But Pelleas overthrew them as they  
dash'd  
Against him one by one ; and these  
return'd,  
But still he kept his watch beneath  
the wall.

Thereon her wrath became a hate ;  
 and once,  
 A week beyond, while walking on the  
 walls  
 With her three knights, she pointed  
 downward, "Look.  
 He haunts me—I cannot breathe—be-  
 seiges me ;  
 Down ! strike him ! put my hate into  
 your strokes,  
 And drive him from my walls." And  
 down they went,  
 And Pelleas overthrew them one by  
 one ;  
 And from the tower above him cried  
 Ettarre,  
 "Bind him and bring him in."

He heard her voice ;  
 Then let the strong hand, which had  
 overthrown  
 Her minion-knights, by those he over-  
 threw  
 Be bounden straight, and so they  
 brought him in.

Then when he came before Ettarre,  
 the sight  
 Of her rich beauty made him at one  
 glance  
 More bondsman in his heart than in  
 his bonds.  
 Yet with good cheer he spake, "Be-  
 hold me Lady,  
 A prisoner and the vassal of thy will ;  
 And if thou keep me in thy donjon  
 here,  
 Content am I so that I see thy face  
 But once a day : for I have sworn my  
 vows.  
 And thou hast given thy promise, and  
 I know  
 That all these pains are trials of my  
 faith,  
 And that thyself when thou hast seen  
 me strain'd  
 And sifted to the utmost, wilt at  
 length  
 Yield me thy love and know me for  
 thy knight."

Then she began to rail so bitterly,  
 With all her damsels, he was stricken  
 mute ;  
 But when she mock'd his vows and the  
 great King,  
 Lighted on words : "For pity of thine  
 own self,  
 Peace, Lady, peace : is he not thine  
 and mine ?"  
 "Thou fool," she said, "I never heard  
 his voice  
 But long'd to break away. Unbind  
 him now,  
 And thrust him out of doors ; for save  
 he be  
 Fool to the midmost marrow of his  
 bones,  
 He will return no more." And those,  
 her three,

Laugh'd, and unbound, and thrust  
 him from the gate.

And after this, a week beyond, again  
 She call'd them, saying, "There he  
 watches yet,  
 There like a dog before his master's  
 door !  
 Kick'd, he returns : do ye not hate  
 him, ye ?  
 Ye know yourselves : how can ye bide  
 at peace,  
 Affronted with his fulsome innocence ?  
 Are ye but creatures of the board and  
 bed,  
 No men to strike ? Fall on him all at  
 once,  
 And if ye slay him I reckon not : if ye  
 fail,  
 Give ye the slave mine order to be  
 bound,  
 Bind him as heretofore, and bring him  
 in :  
 It may be ye shall slay him in his  
 bonds."

She spake ; and at her will they  
 couch'd their spears.  
 Three against one : and Gawain pass-  
 ing by,  
 Bound upon solitary adventure, saw  
 Low down beneath the shadow of  
 those towers  
 A villany, three to one : and thro' his  
 heart  
 The fire of honor and all noble deeds  
 Flash'd, and he call'd, "I strike upon  
 thy side—  
 The catiffs !" "Nay," said Pelleas,  
 "but forbear ;  
 He needs no aid who doth his lady's  
 will."

So Gawain, looking at the villany  
 done,  
 Forebore, but in his heat and eagerness  
 Trembled and quiver'd, as the dog,  
 withheld  
 A moment from the vermin that he  
 sees  
 Before him, shivers, ere he springs  
 and kills.

And Pelleas overthrew them, one to  
 three ;  
 And they rose up, and bound, and  
 brought him in.  
 Then first her anger, leaving Pelleas,  
 burn'd  
 Full on her knights in many an evil  
 name  
 Of craven, weakling, and thrice-beat-  
 en hound :  
 "Yet, take him, ye that scarce are fit  
 to touch.  
 Far less to bind, your victor, and  
 thrust him out,  
 And let who will release him from his  
 bonds.  
 And if he comes again"—there she  
 brags short ;

And Pelleas answer'd, "Lady, for indeed  
I loved you and I deem'd you beautiful,  
I cannot brook to see your beauty marr'd  
Thro' evil spite : and if ye love me not,  
I cannot bear to dream you so forsworn :  
I had liefer ye were worthy of my love,  
Than to be loved again of you—farewell ;  
And tho' ye kill my hope, not yet my love,  
Vex not yourself : ye will not see me more."

While thus he spake, she gazed upon the man  
Of princely bearing, tho' in bonds, and thought,  
"Why have I push'd him from me ? this man loves,  
If love there be : yet him I loved not. Why ?  
I deem'd him fool ? yea, so ? or that in him  
A something—was it nobler than myself ? —  
Seem'd my reproach ? He is not of my kind.  
He could not love me, did he know me well.  
Nay, let him go—and quickly." And her knights  
Laugh'd not, but thrust him bounden out of door.

Forth sprang Gawain, and loosed him from his bonds,  
And fling them o'er the walls ; and afterward,  
Shaking his hands, as from a lazar's rag,  
"Faith of my body," he said, "and art thou not—  
Yea thou art he, whom late our Arthur made  
Knight of his table ; yea and he that won  
The circlet ? wherefore hast thou so defamed  
Thy brotherhood in me and all the rest,  
As let these caitiffs on thee work their will ?"

And Pelleas answer'd, "O, their wills are hers  
For whom I won the circlet ; and mine, hers,  
Thus to be bounden, so to see her face,  
Marr'd tho' it be with spite and mockery now,  
Other than when I found her in the woods ;  
And tho' she hath me bounden but in spite,  
And all to flout me, when they bring me, in,

Let me be bounden, I shall see her face ;  
Else must I die thro' mine unhappiness."

And Gawain answer'd kindly tho' in scorn,  
"Why, let my lady bind me if she will,  
And let my lady beat me if she will :  
But an she send her delegate to thrall  
These fighting hands of mine—Christ kill me then  
But I will slice him handless by the wrist,  
And let my lady sear the stump for him,  
Howl as he may. But hold me for your friend :  
Come, ye know nothing : here I pledge my troth,  
Yea, by the honor of the Table Round,  
I will be leal to thee and work thy work,  
And tame thy jailing princess to thine hand.  
Lend me thine horse and arms, and I will say  
That I have slain thee. She will let me in  
To hear the manner of thy fight and fall ;  
Then, when I come within her counsels, then  
From prime to vespers will I chant thy praise  
As prowtest knight and truest lover, more  
Than any have sung the living, till she long  
To have thee back in lusty life again,  
Not to be bound, save by white bonds and warm,  
Dearer than freedom. Wherefore now thy horse  
And armor : let me go : be comforted :  
Give me three days to melt her fancy, and hope  
The third night hence will bring thee news of gold."

The Pelleas lent his horse and all his arms,  
Saving the goodly sword, his prize, and took  
Gawain's, and said, "Betray me not but help—  
Art thou not he whom men call light-of-love ?"

"Ay," said Gawain, "for women be so light."  
Then bounded forward to the castle walls,  
And raised a bugle hanging from his neck,  
And winded it, and that so musically  
That all the old echoes hidden in the wall  
Rang out like hollow woods at hunt-ing-tide.

Up ran a score of damsels to the tower ;  
 "Avant," they cried, "our lady loves thee not."  
 But Gawain lifting up his visor said,  
 Gawain am I, Gawain of Arthur's court,  
 And I have slain this Pelleas whom ye hate :  
 Behold his horse and armor. Open gate,  
 And I will make you merry."

And down they ran,  
 Her damsels, crying to their lady,  
 "Lo !  
 Pelleas is dead — he told us — he that hath  
 His horse and armor : will ye let him in ?  
 He slew him ! Gawain, Gawain of the court,  
 Sir Gawain — there he waits below the wall,  
 Blowing his bugle as who should say him nay."

And so, leave given, straight on thro' open door  
 Rode Gawain, whom she greeted courteously.  
 "Dead, is it so?" she ask'd. "Ay, ay," said he,  
 "And oft in dying cried upon your name."  
 "Pity on him," she answer'd, "a good knight,  
 But never let me bide one hour at peace."  
 "Ay," thought Gawain, "and ye be fair enow :  
 But I to your dead man have given my troth,  
 That whom ye loathe him will I make you love."

So those three days, aimless about the land,  
 Lost in a doubt, Pelleas wandering  
 Waited, until the third night brought a moon  
 With promise of large light on woods and ways.

The night was hot: he could not rest, but rode  
 Ere midnight to her walls, and bound his horse  
 Hard by the gates. Wide open were the gates,  
 And no watch kept; and in thro' these he past,  
 And heard but his own steps, and his own heart  
 Beating, for nothing moved but his own self,  
 And his own shadow. Then he crost the court,  
 And saw the postern portal also wide yawning; and up a slope of garden,  
 all

Of roses white and red, and wild ones mixt  
 And overgrowing them, went on, and found,  
 Here too, all hush'd below the mellow moon,  
 Save that one rivulet from a tiny cave  
 Came lightening downward, and so split itself  
 Among the roses, and was lost agsin.

Then was he ware that white pavilions rose,  
 Three from the bushes, gilden-peakt : in one,  
 Red after revel, droned her lurdane knights  
 Slumbering, and their three squires across their feet :  
 In one, their malice on the placid lip  
 Froz'n by sweet sleep, four of her damsels lay :  
 And in the third, the circlet of the jousts  
 Bound on her brow, were Gawain and Ettarre.

Back, as a hand that pushes thro' the leaf  
 To find a nest and feels a snake, he drew :  
 Back, as a coward slinks from what he fears  
 To cope with, or a traitor proven, or bound  
 Beaten, did Pelleas in an utter shame  
 Creep with his shadow thro' the court again,  
 Fingering at his sword-handle until he stood  
 There on the castle-bridge once more, and thought,  
 "I will go back, and slay them where they lie."

And so went back and seeing them yet in sleep  
 Said, "Ye, that so dishallow the holy sleep,  
 Your sleep is death," and drew the sword, and thought,  
 "What! slay a sleeping knight? the King hath bound  
 And sworn me to this brotherhood;" again,  
 "Alas that ever a knight should be so false."  
 Then turn'd; and so return'd, and groaning laid  
 The naked sword athwart their naked throats,  
 There left it, and them sleeping; and she lay,  
 The circlet of the tourney round her brows,  
 And the sword of the tourney across her throat.

And forth he past, and mounting on his horse

Stared at her towers that, larger than  
themselves  
In their own darkness, thron'd into  
the moon.  
Then crush'd the saddle with his  
thighs, and clench'd  
His hands, and madden'd with himself  
and moan'd :

"Would they have risen against me  
in their blood  
At the last day? I might have an-  
swer'd them  
Even before high God. O towers so  
strong,  
Huge, solid, would that even while I  
gaze  
The crack of earthquake shivering to  
your base  
Split you, and Hell burst up your  
harlot roofs  
Bellowing, and charr'd you thro' and  
thro' withm,  
Black as the harlot's heart—hollow as  
a skull!  
Let the fierce east scream thro' your  
eyelet-holes,  
And whirl the dust of harlots round  
and round  
In dung and nettles! hiss, snake—I  
saw him there—  
Let the fox bark, let the wolf yell.  
Who yells  
Here in the still sweet summer night,  
but I—  
I, the poor Pelleas whom she call'd her  
fool?  
Fool, beast—he, she, or I? myself  
most fool;  
Beast too, as lacking human wit—dis-  
graced,  
Dishonor'd all for trial of true love—  
Love?—we be all alike: only the  
king  
Hath made us fools and liars. O noble  
vows!  
O great and sane and simple race of  
brutes  
That own no lust because they have no  
law!  
For why should I have loved her to  
my shame?  
I loathe her, as I loved her to my  
shame.  
I never loved her, I but lusted for her  
—Away—"

He dash'd the rowel into his horse,  
And bounded forth and vanish'd thro'  
the night.

Then she, that felt the cold touch on  
her throat,  
awaking knew the sword, and turn'd  
herself  
To Gawain: "Liar, for thou hast not  
slain  
This Pelleas! here he stood and might  
have slain  
Me and thyself." And he that tells  
the tale

Says that her ever-veering fancy turn'd  
To Pelleas, as the one true knight on  
earth,  
And only lover; and thro' her love her  
life  
Wasted and pined, desiring him in  
vain.

But he by wild and way, for half the  
night,  
And over hard and soft, striking the  
sod  
From out the soft, the spark from off  
the hard,  
Rode till the star above the wakening  
sun,  
Beside that tower where Percivale was  
cowl'd,  
Glanced from the rosy forehead of the  
dawn.  
For so the words were flash'd into his  
heart  
He knew not whence or wherefore:  
"O sweet star,  
Pure on the virgin forehead of the  
dawn."  
And there he would have wept, but  
felt his eyes  
Harder and drier than a fountain bed  
In summer: thither came the village  
girls  
And linger'd talking, and they come  
no more  
Till the sweet heavens have fill'd it  
from the heights  
Again with living waters in the change  
Of seasons: hard his eyes; harder his  
heart  
Seem'd; but so weary were his limbs,  
that he,  
Gasping, "Of Arthur's hall am I, but  
here,  
Here let me rest and die," cast himself  
down,  
And gulph'd his griefs in inmost sleep;  
so lay,  
Till shaken by a dream, that Gawain  
fired  
The hall of Merlin, and the morning  
star  
Reel'd in the smoke, brake into flame,  
and fell.

He woke, and being ware of some  
one nigh,  
Sent hands upon him, as to tear him,  
crying  
"False! and I held thee pure as Guin-  
evere."

But Percivale stood near him and  
replied,  
"Am I but false as Guinevere is pure?  
Or art thou mazed with dreams? or  
being one  
Of our free-spoken Table hast not  
heard  
That Lancelot"—there he check'd  
himself and paused.

Then fared it with Sir Pelleas as  
with one

Who gets a wound in battle, and the sword  
That made it plunges thro' the wound again,  
And pricks it deeper : and he shrank and wail'd,  
"Is the Queen false?" and Percivale was mute.  
"Have any of our Round Table held their vows?"  
And Percivale made answer not a word.  
"Is the king true?" "The King!" said Percivale.  
"Why then let men couple at once with wolves.  
What! art thou mad?"

But Pelleas, leaping up,  
Ran thro' the doors and vaulted on his horse  
And fled : small pity upon his horse had he,  
Or on himself, or any, and when he met  
A cripple, one that held a hand for alms—  
Hunch'd as he was, and like an old dwarf-elm  
That turns its back on the salt blast, the boy,  
Paused not but overrode him, shouting  
"False,  
And false with Gawain!" and so left him bruised  
And batter'd, and fled on, and hill and wood  
Went ever streaming by him till the gloom,  
That follows on the turning of the world,  
Darken'd the common path: he twitch'd the reins,  
And made his beast that better knew it, swerve  
Now off it and now on; but when he saw  
High up in heaven the hall that Merlin built,  
Blackening against the dead-green stripes of even,  
"Black nest of rats," he groan'd, "ye build too high."

Not long thereafter from the city gates  
Issued Sir Lancelot riding airily,  
Warm with a gracious parting from the Queen,  
Peace at his heart, and gazing at a star  
And marvelling what it was : on whom  
Across the silent seeded meadow-grass  
Borne, clash'd : and Lancelot, saying,  
"What name hast thou  
That ridest here so blindly and so hard?"  
"I have no name," he shouted, "a scourge am I,  
To lash the treasons of the Table Round."  
"Yea, but thy name?" "I have many names," he cried :

"I am wrath and shame and hate and evil fame,  
And like a poisonous wind I pass to blast  
And blaze the crime of Lancelot and the Queen."  
"First over me," said Lancelot, "shalt thou pass."  
"Fight therefore," yell'd the other, and either knight  
Drew back a space, and when they closed, at once  
The weary steed of Pelleas floundering flung  
His rider, who called out from the dark field,  
"Thou art false as Hell : slay me : I have no sword."  
Then Lancelot, "Yea, between thy lips—and sharp;  
But here will I disedge it by thy death."  
"Slay then," he shriek'd, "my will is to be slain."  
And Lancelot, with his heel upon the fall'n,  
Rolling his eyes, a moment stood, then spake :  
"Rise, weakling ; I am Lancelot ; say thy say."

And Lancelot slowly rode his war-horse back  
To Camelot, and Sir Pelleas in brief while  
Caught his unbroken limbs from the dark field,  
And follow'd to the city. It chanced that both  
Brake into hall together, worn and pale.  
There with h. knights and dames was Guinevere.  
Full wonderingly she gazed on Lancelot  
So soon return'd, and then on Pelleas, him  
Who had not greeted her, but cast himself  
Down on a bench, hard-breathing.  
"Have ye fought?"  
She ask'd of Lancelot. "Ay, my Queen," he said.  
"And thou hast overthrown him?"  
"Ay, my Queen."  
Then she, turning to Pelleas, "O young knight,  
Hath the great heart of knighthood in thee fail'd  
So farthou canst not bide, unfrowardly,  
A fall from him?" Then, for he answer'd not,  
"Or hast thou other griefs? If I, the Queen,  
May help them, loose thy tongue, and let me know."  
But Pelleas lifted up an eye so fierce  
She quail'd ; and he, hissing "I have no sword."  
Sprang from the door into the dark.  
The Queen  
Look'd hard upon her lover, he on her

And each foresaw the dolorous day to be :

And all talk died, as in a grove all song  
Beneath the shadow of some bird of prey,

Then a long silence came upon the hall,  
And Modred thought, "The time is hard at hand."

### THE LAST TOURNAMENT.

DAGONET, the fool, whom Gawain in his moods

Had made mock-knight of Arthur's Table Round,

At Camelot, high above the yellowing woods,

Danced like a wither'd leaf before the Hall.

And toward him from the Hall, with harp in hand,

And from the crown thereof a carcanet

Of ruby swaying to and fro, the prize  
Of Tristram in the jousts of yesterday,  
Came Tristram, saying, "Why skip ye so, Sir Fool?"

For Arthur and Sir Lancelot riding once

Far down beneath a winding wall of rock

Heard a child wail. A stump of oak half-dead,

From roots like some black coil of carven snakes

Clutch'd at the crag, and started thro' mid-air

Bearing an eagle's nest : and thro' the tree

Rush'd ever a rainy wind, and thro' the wind

Pierced ever a child's cry : and crag and tree

Sealing, Sir Lancelot from the perilous nest,

This ruby necklace thrice around her neck,

And all unscarr'd from beak or talon, brought

A maiden babe ; which Arthur pitying took,

Then gave it to his Queen to rear ; the Queen

But coldly acquiescing, in her white arms

Received, and after loved it tenderly,  
And named it Nestling ; so forgot herself

A moment, and her cares ; till that young life

Being smitten in mid-heaven with mortal cold

Past from her ; and in time the carcanet

Text her with plaintive memories of the child :

So she, delivering it to Arthur, said,

"Take thou the jewels of this dead innocence,  
And make them, an thou wilt, a tourney prize."

To whom the King, "Peace to thine eagle-borne

Dead nestling, and this honor after death,

Following thy will ! but, O my Queen, I muse

Why ye not wear on arm, or neck, or zone,

Those diamonds that I rescued from the tarn,

And Lancelot won, methought, for thee to wear."

"Would rather ye had let them fall," she cried,

"Plunge and be lost — ill-fated as they were,

A bitterness to me ! — ye look amazed,  
Not knowing they were lost as soon as given —

Slid from my hands, when I was leaning out

Above the river — that unhappy child

Past in her barge : but rosier luck will go

With these rich jewels, seeing that they came

Not from the skeleton of a brother-slayer,

But the sweet body of a maiden babe.

Perchance — who knows ? — the purest of thy knights

May win them for the purest of my maids."

She ended, and the cry of a great jousts

With trumpet-blowings ran on all the ways

From Camelot in among the faded fields

To furthest towers ; and everywhere the knights

Arm'd for a day of glory before the King.

But on the hither side of that loud morn

Into the hall stagger'd, his visage ribb'd

From ear to ear with dogwhip-weals, his nose

Bridge-broken, one eye out, and one hand off,

And one with shatter'd fingers dangling lame,

A churl, to whom indignantly the King,

"My churl, for whom Christ died, what evil beast

Hath drawn his claws athwart thy face ? or fiend ?

Man was it who marr'd Heaven's image in thee thus ?"

Then, sputtering thro' the hedge of  
splinter'd teeth,  
Yet strangers to the tongue, and with  
blunt stump  
Pitch-blacken'd sawing the air, said the  
maim'd churl,

"He took them and he drave them  
to his tower—  
Some hold he was a table-knight of  
thine—  
A hundred goodly ones—the Red  
Knight he—  
Lord, I was tending swine, and the  
Red Knight  
Brake in upon me and drave them to  
his tower;  
And when I called upon thy name as  
one  
That doest right by gentle and by  
churl,  
Maim'd me and maul'd, and would  
outright have slain,  
Save that he sware me to a message,  
saying—  
'Tell thou the King and all his liars,  
that I  
Have founded my Round Table in the  
North,  
And whatsoever his own knights have  
sworn  
My knights have sworn the counter to  
it—and say  
My tower is full of harlots, like his  
court,  
But mine are worthier, seeing they  
profess  
To be none other than themselves—and  
say  
My knights are all adulterers like his  
own,  
But mine are truer, seeing they pro-  
fess  
To be none other; and say his hour is  
come,  
The heathen are upon him, his long  
lance  
Broken, and his Excalibur a straw.'"

Then Arthur turn'd to Kay the sen-  
eschal,  
"Take thou my churl, and tend him  
curiously  
Like a king's heir, till all his hurts be  
whole.  
The heathen—but that ever-climbing  
wave,  
Hurl'd back again so often in empty  
foam,  
Hath lain for years at rest—and rene-  
gades,  
Thieves, bandits, leavings of confusion,  
whom  
The wholesome realm is purged of  
otherwise,—  
Friends, thro' your manhood and your  
fealty,—now  
Make their last head like Satan in the  
North.  
My younger knights, new-made, in  
whom your flower

Waits to be solid fruit of golden deeds,  
Move with me toward their quelling,  
which achieved,  
The loneliest ways are safe from shore  
to shore.  
But thou, Sir Lancelot, sitting in my  
place  
Enchain'd to-morrow, arbitrate the  
field;  
For wherefore shouldst thou care to  
mingle with it,  
Only to yield my Queen her own  
again?  
Speak, Lancelot, thou art silent: is it  
well?"

There to Sir Lancelot answer'd, "It  
is well:  
Yet better if the King abide, and leave  
The leading of his younger knights to  
me.  
Else, for the King has will'd it, it is  
well."

Then Arthur rose and Lancelot fol-  
low'd him,  
And while they stood without the  
doors, the King  
Turn'd to him saying, "Is it then so  
well?  
Or mine the blame that oft I seem as  
he  
Of whom was written, 'a sound is in his  
ears'—  
The foot that loiters, bidden go,—the  
glance  
That only seems half-loyal to com-  
mand,—  
A manner somewhat fall'n from rever-  
ence—  
Or have I dream'd the bearing of our  
knights  
Tells of a manhood ever less and low-  
er?  
Or whence the fear lest this my realm,  
uprear'd,  
By noble deeds at one with noble vows,  
From flat confusion and brute vio-  
lences,  
Reel back into the beast, and be no  
more?"

He spoke, and taking all his younger  
knights,  
Down the slope city rode, and sharply  
turn'd  
North by the gate. In her high bower  
the Queen,  
Working a tapestry, lifted up her head,  
Watch'd her lord pass, and knew not  
that she sigh'd.  
Then ran across her memory the  
strange rhyme  
Of bygone Merlin, "Where is he who  
knows?  
From the great deep to the great deep  
he goes."

But when the morning of a tourna-  
ment,

By these in earnest, those in mockery,  
 call'd  
 The Tournament of the Dead Innocence,  
 Brake with a wet wind blowing, Lancelot,  
 Round whose sick head all night, like  
 birds of prey,  
 The words of Arthur flying shriek'd,  
 arose,  
 And down a streetway hung with folds  
 of pure  
 White samite, and by fountains running  
 wine,  
 Where children sat in white with cups  
 of gold,  
 Moved to the lists, and there, with  
 slow sad steps  
 Ascending, fill'd his double-dragon'd  
 chair.

He glanced and saw the stately galleries,  
 Dame, damsel, each thro' worship of  
 their Queen  
 White-robed in honor of the stainless  
 child,  
 And some with scatter'd jewels, like a  
 bank  
 Of maiden snow mingled with sparks  
 of fire.  
 He lookt but once, and veil'd his eyes  
 again.

The sudden trumpet sounded as in a  
 dream  
 To ears but half-awaked, then one low  
 roll  
 Of Autumn thunder, and the jousts  
 began :  
 And ever the wind blew, and yellowing  
 leaf  
 And gloom and gleam, and shower and  
 shorn plume  
 Went down it. Sighing weariedly, as  
 one  
 Who sits and gazes on a faded fire,  
 When all the goodlier guests are past  
 away,  
 Sat their great umpire, looking o'er  
 the lists.  
 He saw the laws that ruled the tournament  
 Broken, but spake not ; once, a knight  
 cast down  
 Before his throne of arbitration cursed  
 The dead babe and the follies of the  
 King ;  
 And once the laces of a helmet crack'd,  
 And show'd him, like a vermin in its  
 hole,  
 Modred, a narrow face : anon he heard  
 The voice that billow'd round the barriers  
 roar  
 An ocean-sounding welcome to one  
 knight.  
 But newly-enter'd, taller than the rest,  
 And armor'd all in forest green,  
 whereon  
 There tript a hundred tiny silver deer,

And wearing but a holly-spray for  
 crest,  
 With ever-scattering berries, and on  
 shield  
 A spear, a harp, a bugle—Tristram—  
 late  
 From overseas in Brittany return'd,  
 And marriage with a princess of that  
 realm,  
 Isolt the White—Sir Tristram of the  
 Woods—  
 Whom Lancelot knew, had held some-  
 time with pain  
 His own against him, and now yearn'd  
 to shake  
 The burthen off his heart in one full  
 shock  
 With Tristram ev'n to death : his  
 strong hands gript  
 And dinted the gilt dragons right and  
 left,  
 Until he groan'd for wrath—so many  
 of those,  
 That ware their ladies' colors on the  
 casque,  
 Drew from before Sir Tristram to the  
 bounds,  
 And there with gibes and flickering  
 mockeries  
 Stood, while he mutter'd, "Craven  
 crests ! O shame !  
 What faith have these in whom they  
 swear to love ?  
 The glory of our Round Table is no  
 more."

So Tristram won, and Lancelot gave,  
 the gems,  
 Not speaking other word than "Hast  
 thou won ?  
 Art thou the purest, brother ? See, the  
 hand  
 Wherewith thou takest this is red !"  
 to whom  
 Tristram, half plagued by Lancelot's  
 languorous mood,  
 Made answer, "Ay, but wherefore toss  
 me this  
 Like a dry bone cast to some hungry  
 hound ?  
 Let be thy fair Queen's fantasy,  
 Strength of heart  
 And might of limb, but mainly use and  
 skill,  
 Are winners in this pastime of our  
 King.  
 My hand—belike the lance hath dript  
 upon it—  
 No blood of mine, I trow ; but O chief  
 knight,  
 Right arm of Arthur in the battle-  
 field,  
 Great brother, thou nor I have made  
 the world :  
 Be happy in thy fair Queen as I in  
 mine."

And Tristram round the gallery  
 made his horse  
 Caracole ; then bow'd his homage  
 bluntly saying,

"Fair damsels, each to him who worships each  
Sole Queen of Beauty and of love, behold  
This day my Queen of Beauty is not here,"  
Then most of these were mute, some anger'd, one  
Murmuring "All courtesy is dead,"  
and one,  
"The glory of our Round Table is no more."

Then fell thick rain, plume droopt  
and mantle clung,  
And pettish cries awoke, and the wan day  
Went glooming down in wet and weariness:  
But under her black brows a swarthy dame  
Laught shrilly, crying "Praise the patient saints,  
Our one white day of Innocence hath past,  
Tho' somewhat draggled at the skirt.  
So be it.  
The snowdrop only, flow'ring thro' the year,  
Would make the world as blank as wintertide.  
Come—let us comfort their sad eyes,  
our Queen's  
And Lancelot's, at this night's solemnity  
With all the kindlier colors of the field."

So dame and damsel glitter'd at the feast  
Variously gay: for he that tells the tale  
Liken'd them, saying "as when an hour of cold  
Falls on the mountain in midsummer snows,  
And all the purple slopes of mountain flowers  
Pass under white, till the warm hour returns  
With veer of wind, and all are flowers again;"  
So dame and damsel cast the simple white,  
And glowing in all colors, the live grass,  
Rose-campion, bluebell, kingcup, poppy, glauced  
About the revels, and with mirth so loud  
Beyond all use, that, half-amazed, the Queen,  
And wroth at Tristram and the lawless jousts,  
Brake up their sports, then slowly to her bower  
Parted, and in her bosom pain was lord.

And little Dagonet on the morrow morn,

High over all the yellowing Autumn tide,  
Danced like a wither'd leaf before the hall.  
Then Tristram saying, "Why skip ye so, Sir Fool?"  
Wheel'd round on either heel, Dagonet replied,  
"Belike for lack of wiser company;  
Or being fool, and seeing too much wit  
Makes the world rotten, why, belike I skip  
To know myself the wisest knight of all."  
"Ay, fool," said Tristram, "but 'tis eating dry  
To dance without a catch, a roundelay  
'To dance to.'" Then he twangled on his harp,  
And while he twangled little Dagonet stood  
Quiet as any water-sodden log  
Stay'd in the wandering warble of a brook;  
But when the twangling ended, skipt again;  
Then being ask'd, "Why skipt ye not, Sir fool?"  
Made answer, "I had liefer twenty years  
Skip to the broken music of my brains  
Than any broken music ye can make."  
Then Tristram, waiting for the quip to come,  
"Good now, what music have I broken, fool?"  
And little Dagonet, skipping, "Arthur, the king's;  
For when thou playest that air with Queen Isolot,  
Thou makest broken music with thy bride,  
Her daintier namesake down in Brit-tany—  
And so thou breakest Arthur's music too."  
"Save for that broken music in thy brains,  
Sir Fool," said Tristram, "I would break thy head.  
Fool, I came late, the heathen wars were o'er,  
The life had flown, we sware but by the shell—  
I am but a fool to reason with a fool.  
Come, thou art crabb'd and sour: but lean me down,  
Sir Dagonet, one of thy long asses' ears,  
And hearken if my music be not true.  
"Free love—free field—we love but while we may:  
The woods are hush'd, their music is no more:  
The leaf is dead, the yearning past away;  
New leaf, new life—the days of frost are o'er:  
New life, new love to suit the newer day;

New loves are sweet as those that went before :  
Free love—free field—we love but while we may.’

“Ye might have moved slow-measure to my tune,  
Not stood stockstill. I made it in the woods,  
And found it ring as true as tested gold.”

But Dagonet with one foot poised in his hand,  
“Friend, did ye mark that fountain yesterday  
Made to run wine?—but this had run itself”  
All out like a long life to a sour end—  
And them that round it sat with golden cups  
To hand the wine to whomsoever came—  
The twelve small damosels white as Innocence,  
In honor of poor Innocence the babe,  
Who left the gems which Innocence the Queen  
Lent to the King, and Innocence the King  
Gave for a prize—and one of those white slips  
Handed her cup and piped, the pretty one,  
‘Drink, drink, Sir Fool,’ and thereupon I drank,  
Spat—pish—the cup was gold, the draught was mud.”

And Tristram, “Was it muddier than thy gibes ?  
Is all the laughter gone dead out of thee ?—  
Not marking how the knighthood mock thee, fool—  
‘Fear God ; honor the king—his one true knight—  
Sole follower of the vows’—for here be they  
Who knew thee swine enow before I came,  
Smuttier than blasted grain : but when the King  
Had made thee fool, thy vanity so shot up  
It frightened all free fool from out thy heart ;  
Which left thee less than fool, and less than swine,  
A naked aught—yet swine I hold thee still,  
For I have flung thee pearls, and find thee swine.”

And little Dagonet mincing with his feet,  
“Knight, an ye fling those rubies round my neck  
In lieu of hers, I’ll hold thou hast some touch

Of music, since I care not for thy pearls.  
Swine ? I have wallow’d, I have wash’d—the world  
Is flesh and shadow—I have had my day.  
The dirty nurse, Experience, in her kind  
Hath foul’d me—an I wallow’d, then I wash’d—  
I have had my day and my philosophies—  
And thank the Lord I am King Arthur’s fool.  
Swine, say ye ? swine, goats, asses, rams, and geese  
Troop’d round a Paynim harper once, who thrumm’d  
On such a wire as musically as thou  
Some such fine song—but never a king’s fool.”

And Tristram, “Then were swine, goats, asses, geese  
The wiser fools, seeing thy Paynim bard  
Had such a mastery of his mystery  
That he could harp his wife up out of Hell.”

Then Dagonet, turning on the ball of his foot,  
“And whither harp’st thou thine ?  
down ! and thyself  
Down ! and two more : a helpful harper thou,  
That harpest downward ! Dost thou know the star  
We call the harp of Arthur up in heaven ?”

And Tristram, “Ay, Sir Fool, for when our King  
Was victor wellnigh day by day, the knights,  
Glorying in each new glory, set his name  
High on all hills, and in the signs of heaven.”

And Dagonet answer’d, “Ay, and when the land  
Was freed, and the Queen false, ye set yourself  
To babble about him, all to show your wit—  
And whether he were king by courtesy, Or king by right—and so went harping down  
The black king’s highway, got so far, and grew  
So witty, that ye play’d at ducks and drakes  
With Arthur’s vows on the great lake of fire.  
Tuwhoo ! do ye see it ? do ye see the star ?”

“Nay, fool,” said Tristram, “not in open day.”  
And Dagonet, “Nay, nor will I see it and hear.

It makes a silent music up in heaven,  
 And I, and Arthur and the angels  
 hear,  
 And then we skip," "Lo, fool," he  
 said, "ye talk  
 Fool's treason: is the king thy brother  
 fool?"  
 Then little Dagonet clapt his hands  
 and shrill'd,  
 "Ay, ay, my brother fool, the king of  
 fools!  
 Conceits himself as God that he can  
 make  
 Figs out of thistles, silk from bristles,  
 milk  
 From burning spurge, honey from  
 hornet-combs,  
 And men from beasts. Long live the  
 king of fools!"

And down the city Dagonet danced  
 away.  
 But thro' the slowly-mellowing ave-  
 nues  
 And solitary passes of the wood  
 Rode Tristram toward Lyonesse and  
 the west.  
 Before him fled the face of Queen Isolt  
 With ruby-circled neck, but evermore  
 Past, as a rustle or twitter in the wood  
 Made dull his inner, keen his outer eye  
 For all that walk'd, or crept, or  
 perched, or flew.  
 Anon the face, as, when a gust hath  
 blown,  
 Unruffling waters re-collect the shape  
 Of one that in them sees himself, re-  
 turn'd;  
 But at the slot or fewmets of a deer,  
 Or ev'n a fall'n feather, vanish'd again.

So on for all that day from lawn to  
 lawn  
 Thro' many a league-long bower he  
 rode. At length  
 A lodge of intertwined beechen-  
 boughs  
 Furze-craim'd, and bracken-rooft, the  
 which himself  
 Built for a summer day with Queen  
 Isolt  
 Against a shower, dark in the golden  
 grove  
 Appearing, sent his fancy back to  
 where  
 She lived a moon in that low lodge  
 with him:  
 Till Mark her lord had past, the  
 Cornish king,  
 With six or seven, when Tristram was  
 away,  
 And snatch'd her thence; yet dreading  
 worse than shame  
 Her warrior Tristram, spake not any  
 word,  
 But bode his hour, devising wretched-  
 ness.

And now that desert lodge to Trist-  
 ram lookt

So sweet, that, halting, in he past, and  
 sank  
 Down on a drift of foliage randour  
 blown:  
 But could not rest for musing how to  
 smooth  
 And sleek his marriage over to the  
 Queen.  
 Perchance in lone Tintagil far from  
 all  
 The tonguesters of the court she had  
 not heard.  
 But then what folly had sent him over-  
 seas  
 After she left him lonely here? a  
 name?  
 Was it the name of one in Brittany,  
 Isolt, the daughter of the King?  
 "Isolt  
 Of the white hands" they call'd her:  
 the sweet name  
 Allured him first, and then the maid  
 herself,  
 Who served him well with those white  
 hands of hers,  
 And loved him well, until himself had  
 thought  
 He loved her also, wedded easily,  
 But left her all as easily, and return'd.  
 The black-blue Irish hair and Irish  
 eyes  
 Had drawn him home — what marvel?  
 then he laid  
 His brows upon the drifted leaf and  
 dream'd.

He seem'd to pace the strand of Brit-  
 tany  
 Between Isolt of Britain and his  
 bride,  
 And show'd them both the ruby-chain,  
 and both  
 Began to struggle for it, till his Queen  
 Graspt it so hard, that all her hand was  
 red.  
 Then cried the Breton, "Look, her  
 hand is red!  
 These be no rubies, this is frozen blood,  
 And melts within her hand—her hand  
 is hot  
 With ill desires, but this I gave thee,  
 look,  
 Is all as cool and white as any flower."  
 Follow'd a rush of eagle's wings and  
 then  
 A whimpering of the spirit of the  
 child,  
 Because the twain had spoil'd her car-  
 canet.

He dream'd; but Arthur with a hun-  
 dred spears  
 Rode far, till o'er the illimitable reed,  
 And many a glancing plash and sal-  
 lowy isle,  
 The wide-wing'd sunset of the misty  
 marsh  
 Glared on a huge machicolated tower  
 That stood with open doors, whereout  
 was roll'd

**A** roar of riot, as from men secure  
**Amid** their marshes, ruffians at their ease  
**Among** their harlot-brides, an evil song.  
 "Lo there," said one of Arthur's youth,  
 for there,  
 High on a grim dead tree before the tower,  
 A goodly brother of The Table Round  
 Swung by the neck : and on the boughs  
 a shield  
 Showing a shower of blood in a field  
 noir,  
 And there beside a horn, inflamed the knights  
 At that dishonor done the gilded spur,  
 Till each would clash the shield, and  
 blow the horn.  
 But Arthur waved them back : alone  
 he rode.  
 Then at the dry harsh roar of the  
 great horn,  
 That sent the face of all the marsh  
 aloft  
 An ever upward-rushing storm and  
 cloud  
 Of shriek and plume, the Red Knight  
 heard, and all,  
 Even to tipmost lance and topmost  
 helm,  
 In blood-red armor sallying, howl'd to  
 the King,  
 "The teeth of Hell flay bare and  
 gnash thee flat !—  
 Lo ! art thou not that eunuch-hearted  
 King  
 Who fain had clipt free manhood from  
 the world—  
 The woman-worshipper ? Yea, God's  
 curse, and I !  
 Slain was the brother of my paramour  
 By a knight of thine, and I that heard  
 her whine  
 And snivel, being eunuch-hearted too,  
 Sware by the scorpion-worm that twists  
 in hell,  
 And stings itself to everlasting death,  
 To hang whatever knight of thine I  
 fought  
 And tumbled. Art thou King ?—Look  
 to thy life !"  
 He ended : Arthur knew the voice ;  
 the face  
 Wellnigh was helmet-hidden, and the  
 name  
 Went wandering somewhere darkling  
 in his mind.  
 And Arthur deign'd not use of word or  
 sword,  
 But let the drunkard, as he stretch'd  
 from horse  
 To strike him, overbalancing his bulk,  
 Down from the causeway heavily to  
 the swamp  
 Fall, as the crest of some slow-arching  
 wave  
 Heard in dead night along that table-  
 shore

Drops flat, and after the great waters  
 break  
 Whiten for half a league, and thin  
 themselves  
 Far over sands marbled with moon and  
 cloud,  
 From less and less to nothing ; thus he  
 fell  
 Head-heavy, while the knights, who  
 watch'd him, roar'd  
 And shouted and leapt down upon the  
 fall'n ;  
 There trampled out his face from being  
 known,  
 And sank his head in mire, and slimed  
 themselves :  
 Nor heard the King for their own cries,  
 but sprang  
 Thro' open doors, and swording right  
 and left  
 Men, women, on their sodden faces,  
 hurl'd  
 The tables over and the wines, and  
 slew  
 Till all the rafters rang with woman-  
 yells,  
 And all the pavement stream'd with  
 massacre :  
 Then, yell with yell echoing, they fired  
 the tower.  
 Which half that autumn night, like the  
 live North,  
 Red-pulsing up thro' Alioth and Alcor,  
 Made all above it, and a hundred meres  
 About it, as the water Moab saw  
 Come round by the East, and out be-  
 yond them flush'd  
 The long low dune, and lazy-plunging  
 sea.

So all the ways were safe from shore  
 to shore,  
 But in the heart of Arthur pain was  
 lord.  
 Then out of Tristram waking the red  
 dream  
 Fled with a shout, and that low lodge  
 return'd,  
 Mid-forest, and the wind among the  
 boughs.  
 He whistled his good warhorse left to  
 graze  
 Among the forest greens, vaulted upon  
 him,  
 And rode beneath an ever-showering  
 leaf,  
 Till one lone woman, weeping near a  
 cross,  
 Stay'd him, "Why weep ye ?" "Lord,"  
 she said, "my man  
 Hath left me or is dead" ; whereon he  
 thought—  
 "What an she hate me now ? I would  
 not this.  
 What an she love me still ? I would  
 not that.  
 I know not what I would" —but said  
 to her,—  
 "Yet weep not thou, lest, if thy mate  
 return

He find thy favor changed and love thee  
not" —

Then pressing day by day thro' Lyon-  
esse

Last in a roky hollow, belling, heard  
The hounds of Mark, and felt the good-  
ly hounds

Yelp at his heart, but, turning, past and  
gain'd

Tintagil, half in sea, and high on land,  
A crown of towers.

Down in a casement sat,  
A low sea-sunset glorying round her  
hair

And glossy-throated grace, Isolt the  
Queen.

And when she heard the feet of Tris-  
tram grind

The spring stone that scaled about  
her tower,

Flush'd, started, met him at the doors,  
and there

Belted his body with her white em-  
brace,

Crying aloud, "Not Mark — not Mark,  
my soul.

The footstep flutter'd me at first: not  
he:

Catlike thro' his own castle steals my  
Mark,

But warrior-wise thou stridest through  
his halls

Who hates thee, as I him — ev'n to the  
death.

My soul, I felt my hatred for my  
Mark

Quickened within me, and knew that  
thou wert high."

To whom Sir Tristram smiling, "I am  
here.

Let bethy Mark, seeing he is not thine."

And drawing somewhat backward  
she replied,

"Can he be wrong'd who is not ev'n his  
own,

But save for dread of thee had beaten  
me,

Scratch'd, bitten, blinded, marr'd me  
somehow — Mark?

What rights are his that dare not  
strike for them?

Not lift a hand — not, tho' he found  
me thus!

But hearken, have ye met him? hence  
he went

To-day for three days' hunting — as he  
said —

And so returns belike within an hour.  
Mark's way, my soul! — but eat not

thou with him,  
Because he hates thee even more than  
fears;

Nor drink: and when thou passest any  
wood

Close busher, lest an arrow from the  
bush

Should leave me all alone with Mark  
and hell.

My God, the measure of my hate <sup>as</sup>  
Mark

Is as the measure of my love for thee."

So, pluck'd one way by hate and one  
by love,

Drain'd of her force, again she sat, and  
spake

To Tristram, as he knelt before her,  
saying,

"O hunter, and O blower of the horn,  
Harper, and thou hast been a rover

too,  
For, ere I mated with my shambling  
king,

Ye twain had fallen out about the  
bride

Of one — his name is out of me — the  
prize,

If prize she were — (what marvel —  
she could see) —

Thine, friend; and ever since my  
craven seeks

To wreck thee villanously: but, O Sir  
Knight,

What dame or damsel have ye kneeled  
to last?"

And Tristram, "Last to my Queen  
Paramount,

Here now to my Queen Paramount of  
love,

And loveliness, ay, lovelier than when  
first

Her light feet fell on our rough  
Lyonesse,

Sailing from Ireland."

Softly laugh'd Isolt,  
"Flatter me not, for hath not our great  
Queen

My dole of beauty trebled?" and he  
said,

"Her beauty is her beauty, and thine  
thine,

And thine is more to me — soft, gra-  
cious, kind —

Save when thy Mark is kindled on thy  
lips

Most gracious; but she, haughty, ev'n  
to him,

Lancelot; for I have seen him wan-  
enow

To make one doubt if ever the great  
Queen

Have yielded him her love."

To whom Isolt,  
"Ah then, false hunter and false har-  
per, thou

Who brakest thro' the scruple of my  
bond,

Calling me thy white hind, and saying  
to me

That Guinevere had sinned against the  
highest,

And I — misyoked with such a want of  
man —

That I could hardly sin against the  
lowest."

He answered, "O my soul, be comforted!  
If this be sweet, to sin in leading-strings,  
If here be comfort, and if ours be sin,  
Crown'd warrant had we for the crowning sin  
That made us happy : but how ye greet me — fear  
And fault and doubt — no word of that fond tale —  
Thy deep heart-yearnings, thy sweet memories  
Of Tristram in that year he was away."

And, saddening on the sudden, spake Isolt,  
"I had forgotten all in my strong joy  
To see thee — yearnings? — ay! for, hour by hour,  
Here in the never-ending afternoon,  
O sweeter than all memories of thee,  
Deeper than any yearnings after thee  
Seem'd those far-rolling, westward-smiling seas,  
Watched from this tower. Isolt of Britain dash'd  
Before Isolt of Brittany on the strand,  
Would that have chill'd her Bride-kiss?  
Wedded her?  
Fought in her father's battles? wounded there?  
The King was all fulfill'd with gratefulness,  
And she, my namesake of the hands, that heal'd  
Thy hurt and heart with unguent and caress —  
Well — can I wish her any huger wrong  
Than having known thee? her too hast thou left  
To pine and waste in those sweet memories?  
O were I not my Mark's, by whom all men  
Are noble, I should hate thee more than love."

And Tristram, fondling her light hands, replied,  
"Grace, Queen, for being loved: she loved me well.  
Did I love her? the name at least I loved.  
Isolt? — I fought his battles, for Isolt!  
The night was dark; the true star set. Isolt!  
The name was ruler of the dark — Isolt?  
Care not for her! patient, and prayerful, meek,  
Pale-blooded, she will yield herself to God."

And Isolt answer'd, "Yea, and why not I?  
Mine is the larger need, who am not meek,  
Pale-blooded, prayerful. Let me tell the now

Here one black, mute midsummer night  
I sat  
Lonely, but musing on thee, wondering where,  
Murmuring a light song I had heard thee sing.  
And once or twice I spake thy name aloud.  
Then dash'd a levin-brand; and near me stood,  
In fuming sulphur blue and green, a fiend —  
Mark's way to steal behind one in the dark —  
For there was Mark: 'He has wedded her,' he said,  
Not said, but hissed it: then this crown of towers  
So shook to such a roar of all the sky,  
That here in utter dark I swoon'd away,  
And woke again in utter dark, and cried,  
'I will flee hence and give myself to God' —  
And thou wert lying in thy new leman's arms."

Then Tristram, ever dallying with her hand,  
"May God be with thee, sweet, when old and gray,  
And past desire!" a saying that anger'd her.  
"May God be with thee, sweet, when thou art old,  
And sweet no more to me!" I need Him now.  
For when had Lancelot utter'd aught so gross  
Ev'n to the swineherd's malkin in the mast?  
The greater man, the greater courtesy.  
But thou, thro' ever harrying thy wild beasts —  
Save that to touch a harp, tilt with a lance  
Becomes thee well — art grown wild beast thyself.  
How darest thou, if lover, push me even  
In fancy from thy side, and set me far  
In the gray distance, half a life away,  
Here to be loved no more? Unsay it, unswear!  
Flatter me rather, seeing me so weak,  
Broken with Mark and hate and solitude,  
Thy marriage and mine own, that I should suck  
Lies like sweet wines: lie to me: I believe.  
Will ye not lie? not swear, as there ye kneel,  
And solemnly as when ye sware to him,  
The man of men, our King — My God, the power  
Was once in vows when men believed the King!  
They lied not then, who sware, and thro' their vows

The King prevailing made his realm :—  
 I say,  
 Swear to me thou wilt love me ev'n  
 when old,  
 Gray-haired, and past desire, and in  
 despair."

Then Tristram, pacing moodily up  
 and down,  
 "Vows! did ye keep the vow ye made  
 to Mark  
 More than I mine? Lied, say ye?  
 Nay, but learnt,  
 The vow that binds too strictly snaps  
 itself—  
 My knighthood taught me this—ay,  
 being snapt—  
 We run more counter to the soul there-  
 of  
 Than had we neversworn. I swear no  
 more.  
 I swore to the great King, and am for-  
 sworn.  
 For once—ev'n to the height—I hon-  
 or'd him.  
 'Man, is he man at all?' methought,  
 when first  
 I rode from our rough Lyonesse, and  
 beheld  
 That victor of the Pagan throned in  
 hall—  
 His hair, a sun that ray'd from off a  
 brow  
 Like hillsnow high in heaven, the steel-  
 blue eyes,  
 The golden beard that clothed his lips  
 with light—  
 Moreover, that weird legend of his  
 birth,  
 With Merlin's mystic babble about his  
 end,  
 Amazed me; then, his foot was on a  
 stool  
 Shaped as a dragon; he seem'd to me  
 no man,  
 But Michaël trampling Satan; so I  
 sware,  
 Being amazed: but this went by—the  
 vows!  
 O ay—the wholesome madness of an  
 hour  
 They served their use, their time; for  
 every knight  
 Believed himself a greater than himself  
 And every follower eyed him as a God;  
 Till he, being lifted up beyond himself,  
 Did mightier deeds than elsewhere he  
 had done,  
 And so the realm was made; but then  
 their vows—  
 First mainly thro' that sullyng of our  
 Queen—  
 Began to gall the knighthood, asking  
 whence  
 Had Arthur right to bind them to him-  
 self?  
 Dropt down from heaven? wash'd up  
 from out the deep?  
 They fail'd to trace him thro' the flesh  
 and blood

Of our old Kings: whence then? a  
 doubtful lord  
 To bind them by inviolable vows,  
 Which flesh and blood perforce would  
 violate:  
 For feel this arm of mine—the tide  
 within  
 Red with free chase and heather-  
 scented air,  
 Pulsing full man; can Arthur make  
 me pure  
 As any maiden child? lock up my  
 tongue  
 From uttering freely what I freely  
 hear?  
 Bind me to one? The great world  
 laughs at it.  
 And worldling of the world am I, and  
 know  
 The ptarmigan that whitens ere his  
 hour  
 Wooes his own end; we are not angels  
 here  
 Nor shall be: vows—I am woodman of  
 the woods,  
 And hear the garnet-headed yaffingale  
 Mock them: my soul, we love but while  
 we may:  
 And therefore is my love so large for  
 thee,  
 Seeing it is not bounded save by love."

Here ending, he moved toward her,  
 and she said,  
 "Good: an I turn'd away my love for  
 thee  
 To some one thrice as courteous as thy-  
 self—  
 For courtesy wins woman all as well  
 As valor may—but he that closes both  
 Is perfect, he is Lancelot—taller in-  
 deed,  
 Rosier, and comelier, thou—but say I  
 loved  
 This knightliest of all knights, and  
 cast thee back  
 Thine own small saw 'We love but  
 while we may,'  
 Well then, what answer?"

He that while she spake,  
 Mindful of what he brought to adorn  
 her with,  
 The jewels, had let one finger lightly  
 touch  
 The warm white apple of her throat,  
 replied,  
 "Press this a little closer, sweet, un-  
 til—  
 Come, I am hunger'd and half-anger'd  
 —meat,  
 Wine, wine—and I will love thee to the  
 death,  
 And out beyond into the dream to  
 come."

So then, when both were brought to  
 full accord,  
 She rose, and set before him all he  
 will'd;

And after these had comforted the  
blood  
With meats and wines, and satiated  
their hearts—  
Now talking of their woodland para-  
dise,  
The deer, the dews, the fern, the  
founts, the lawns;  
Now mocking at the much ungainli-  
ness,  
And craven shifts, and long crane legs  
of Mark—  
Then Tri-tram laughing caught the  
harp, and sang:

"Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that bend  
the brier!  
A star in heaven, a star within the  
mere!  
Ay, ay, O ay—a star was my desire,  
And one was far apart, and one was  
near:  
Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that bow the  
grass!  
And one was water and one star was  
fire,  
And one will ever shine and one will  
pass.  
Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that move the  
mere."

Then in the light's last glimmer Tris-  
tram show'd  
And swung the ruby carcanet. She  
cried,  
"The collar of some order, which our  
King  
Hath newly founded, all for thee, my  
soul,  
For thee, to yield thee grace beyond  
thy peers."

"Not so, my Queen," he said, "but  
the red fruit  
Grown on a magic oak-tree in mid-  
heaven,  
And won by Tristram as a tourney-  
prize,  
And hither brought by Tristram for his  
last  
Love-offering and peace-offering unto  
thee."

He rose, he turn'd, and flinging round  
her neck,  
Claspt it; but while he bow'd himself  
to lay  
Warm kisses in the hollow of her  
throat,  
Out of the dark, just as the lips had  
touch'd,  
Behind him rose a shadow and a shriek—  
"Mark's way," said Mark, and clove  
him thro' the brain.

That night came Arthur home, and  
while he climb'd,  
All in a death-dumb autumn-dripping  
gloom,  
The stairway to the hall, and look'd  
and saw

The great Queen's bower was dark,—  
about his feet  
A voice clung sobbing till he question'd  
it,  
"What art thou?" and the voice about  
his feet  
Sent up an answer, sobbing, "I am thy  
fool,  
And I shall never make thee smile  
again."

GUINEVERE.

QUEEN GUINEVERE had fled the court,  
and sat  
There in the holy house at Almesbury  
Weeping, none with her save a little  
maid,  
A novice: one low light betwixt them  
burn'd  
Blurr'd by the creeping mist, for all  
abroad,  
Beneath a moon unseen albeit at full,  
The white mist, like a face-cloth to the  
face,  
Clung to the dead earth, and the land  
was still.

For hither had she fled, her cause of  
flight  
Sir Modred; he that like a subtle beast  
Lay couchant with his eyes upon the  
throne.  
Ready to spring, waiting a chance: for  
this,  
He chill'd the popular praises of the  
King  
With silent smiles of slow disparage-  
ment;  
And tamper'd with the Lords of the  
White Horse,  
Heathen, the brood by Hengist left;  
and sought  
To make disruption in the Table  
Round  
Of Arthur and to splinter it into feuds  
Serving his traitorous end; and all his  
aims  
Were sharpen'd by strong hate for  
Lancelot.

For thus it chanced one morn when  
all the court,  
Green-suited, but with plumes that  
mock'd the may,  
Had been, their wont, a-maying and  
return'd,  
That Modred still in green, all ear and  
eye,  
Climb'd to the high top of the garden-  
wall  
To spy some secret scandal if he might.  
And saw the Queen who sat betwixt  
her best  
Enid, and lissome Vivien, of her court  
The wildest and the worst; and more  
than this  
He saw not, for Sir Lancelot passing  
by

Spied where he couch'd, and as the  
 gardener's hand  
 Picks from the colewort a green cater-  
 pillar,  
 So from the high wall and the flowering  
 grove  
 Of grasses Lancelot pluck'd him by the  
 heel,  
 And cast him as a worm upon the way;  
 But when he knew the Prince tho'  
 marr'd with dust,  
 He, reverencing king's blood in a bad  
 man,  
 Made such excuses as he might, and,  
 these  
 Full knightly without scorn; for in  
 those days  
 No knight of Arthur's noblest dealt in  
 scorn;  
 But, if a man were halt or hunch'd, in  
 him  
 By those whom God had made full-  
 limb'd and tall,  
 Scorn was allow'd as part of his defect,  
 And he was answer'd softly by the  
 King  
 And all his Table. So Sir Lancelot help  
 To raise the Prince, who rising twice  
 or thrice  
 Full sharply smote his knees, and  
 smiled, and went:  
 But, ever after, the small violence  
 done  
 Rankled in him and ruffled all his  
 heart,  
 As the sharp wind that ruffles all day  
 long  
 A little bitter pool about a stone  
 On the bare coast.

But when Sir Lancelot told  
 This matter to the Queen, at first she  
 laugh'd  
 Lightly, to think of Modred's dusty  
 fall,  
 Then shudder'd, as the village wife  
 who cries  
 "I shudder, some one steps across my  
 grave;"  
 Then laugh'd again, but faintlier, for  
 indeed  
 She half-foresaw that he, the subtle  
 beast,  
 Would track her guilt until he found,  
 and hers  
 Would be for evermore a name of  
 scorn.  
 Henceforward rarely could she front  
 in Hall,  
 Or elsewhere, Modred's narrow foxy  
 face,  
 Heart-hiding smile, and gray persis-  
 tent eye:  
 Henceforward too, the Powers that  
 tend the soul,  
 To help it from the death that cannot  
 die,  
 And save it even in extremes, began  
 To vex and plague her. Many a time  
 for hours,

Beside the placid breathings of the  
 King,  
 In the dead night, grim faces came and  
 went  
 Before her, or a vague spiritual fear—  
 Like to some doubtful noise of creaking  
 doors,  
 Heard by the watcher in a haunted  
 house,  
 That keeps the rust of murder on the  
 walls—  
 Held her awake: or if she slept, she  
 dream'd  
 An awful dream; for then she seem'd  
 to stand  
 On some vast plain before a setting  
 sun,  
 And from the sun there swiftly made at  
 her  
 A ghastly something, and its shadow  
 flew  
 Before it, till it touch'd her, and she  
 turn'd—  
 When lo! her own, that broadening  
 from her feet,  
 And blackening, swallow'd all the land,  
 and in it  
 Far cities burnt, and with a cry she  
 woke,  
 And all this trouble did not pass but  
 grew;  
 Till ev'n the clear face of the guileless  
 King,  
 And trustful courtesies of household  
 life,  
 Became her bane; and at the last she  
 said,  
 "O Lancelot, get thee hence to thine  
 own land,  
 For if thou tarry we shall meet again,  
 And if we meet again, some evil  
 chance  
 Will make the smouldering scandal  
 break and blaze  
 Before the people, and our lord the  
 King."  
 And Lancelot ever promised, but re-  
 main'd,  
 And still they met and met. Again she  
 said,  
 "O Lancelot, if thou love me get thee  
 hence."  
 And then they were agreed upon a  
 night  
 (When the good King should not be  
 there) to meet  
 And part for ever. Passion-pale they  
 met  
 And greeted: hands in hands, and eye  
 to eye,  
 Low on the border of her couch they  
 sat  
 Stammering and staring: it was their  
 last hour.  
 A madness of farewells. And Modred  
 brought  
 His creatures to the basement of the  
 tower  
 For testimony; and crying with full  
 voice

"Traitor, come out, ye are trap at last," aroused  
 Lancelot, who rushing outward lion-like  
 Leapt on him, and hurl'd him headlong,  
 and he fell  
 Stunn'd, and his creatures took and bare him off  
 And all was still : then she, " the end is come  
 And I am shamed for ever ;" and he said  
 " Mine be the shame ; mine was the sin : but rise,  
 And fly to my strong castle overseas :  
 There will I hide thee, till my life shall end,  
 There hold thee with my life against the world."  
 She answer'd " Lancelot, wilt thou hold me so "  
 Nay friend, for we have taken our farewells.  
 Would God, that thou couldst hide me from myself !  
 Mine is the shame, for I was wife, and thou  
 Unwedded ; yet rise now, and let us fly.  
 For I will draw me into sanctuary,  
 And bide my doom." So Lancelot got her horse,  
 Set her thereon, and mounted on his own,  
 And then they rode to the divided way,  
 There kiss'd, and parted weeping : for he past,  
 Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen,  
 Back to his land ; but she to Almesbury  
 Fled all night long by glimmering waste and weald,  
 And heard the Spirits of the waste and weald  
 Moan as she fled, or thought she heard them moan :  
 And in herself she moaned " too late, too late !"  
 Till in the cold wind that foreruns the morn,  
 A blot in heaven, the Raven, flying high,  
 Croak'd, and she thought " he spies a field of death ;  
 For now the Heathen of the Northern Sea,  
 Lured by the crimes and frailties of the court,  
 Begin to slay the folk, and spoil the land."  
 And when she came to Almesbury she spake  
 There to the nuns, and said, mine enemies  
 Pursue me, but, O peaceful Sisterhood,  
 Receive, and yield me sanctuary, nor ask

Her name, to whom ye yield it, till her time  
 To tell you : " and her beauty, grace and power  
 Wrought as a charm upon them, and they spared  
 To ask it. So the stately Queen abode  
 For many a week, unknown, among the nuns ;  
 Nor with them mix'd, nor told her name, nor sought,  
 Wrapt in her grief, for housel or for shrift,  
 But communed only with the little maid,  
 Who pleased her with a babbling heedless-ness  
 Which often lured her from herself ; but now,  
 This night, a rumor wildly blown about  
 Came, that Sir Modred had usurped the realm,  
 And leagued him with the heathen, while the King  
 Was waging war on Lancelot : then she thought,  
 " With what a hate the people and the King  
 Must hate me," and bow'd down upon her hands  
 Silent, until the little maid, who brook'd  
 No silence, brake it, uttering " late ! so late !  
 What hour, I wonder, now ? " and when she drew  
 No answer, by and by began to hum  
 An air the nuns had taught her ; " late, so late ! "  
 Which when she heard, the Queen look'd up, and said,  
 " O maiden, if indeed ye list to sing,  
 Sing, and unbind my heart that I may weep."  
 Whereat full willingly sang the little maid.  
 " Late, late so late ! and dark the night and chill !  
 Late, late, so late ! but we can enter still.  
 Too late, too late ! ye cannot enter now.  
 " No light had we : for that we do repent ;  
 And learning this, the bridegroom will relent.  
 Too late, too late ! ye cannot enter now.  
 " No light : so late : and dark and chill the night !  
 O let us in, that we may find the light !  
 Too late, too late : ye cannot enter now.  
 Have we not heard the bridegroom is so sweet ?

O let us in, tho' late, to kiss his feet !  
No, no, too late ! ye cannot enter  
now."

So sang the novice, while full passionately,  
Her head upon her hands, remembering  
Her thought when first she came, wept  
the sad Queen.  
Then said the little novice prattling to  
her.

"O pray you, noble lady, weep no  
more :  
But let my words, the words of one so  
small,  
Who knowing nothing knows but to  
obey,  
And if I do not there is penance given--  
Comfort your sorrows ; for they do not  
flow  
From evil done ; right sure am I of  
that,  
Who see your tender grace and stateli-  
ness.  
But weigh your sorrows with our lord  
the King's,  
And weighing find them less ; for gone  
is he  
To wage grim war against Sir Lancelot  
there,  
Round that strong castle where he holds  
the Queen ;  
And Modred whom he left in charge of  
all,  
The traitor—Ah sweet lady, the King's  
grief  
For his own self, and his own Queen,  
and realm,  
Must needs be thrice as great as any of  
ours.  
For me, I thank the saints, I am not  
great.  
For if there ever come a grief to me  
I cry my cry in silence, and have done :  
None knows it and my tears have  
brought me good :  
But even were the griefs of little ones  
As great as those of great ones, yet this  
grief  
Is added to the griefs the great must  
bear,  
That howsoever much they may desire  
Silence, they cannot weep behind a  
cloud :  
As even here they talk at Almesbury  
About the good King and his wicked  
Queen,  
And were I such a King with such a  
Queen,  
Well might I wish to veil her wicked-  
ness,  
But were I such a King, it could not  
be."

Then to her own sad heart mutter'd  
the Queen.  
"Will the child kill me with her inno-  
cent talk ?"  
But openly she answer'd "must not I,

If this false traitor have displaced his  
lord,  
Grieve with the common grief of all  
the realm ?"

"Yea," said the maid, "this is all  
woman's grief,  
That she is woman, whose disloyal life  
Hath wrought confusion in the Table  
Round  
Which good King Arthur founded,  
years ago,  
With signs and miracles and wonders,  
there  
At Camelot, ere the coming of the  
Queen."

Then thought the Queen within her-  
self again ;  
"Will the child kill me with her fool-  
ish prate ?"  
But openly she spake and said to her ;  
"O little maid, shut in by nunnery  
walls,  
What canst thou know of Kings and  
Tables Round,  
Or what of signs and wonders, but the  
signs  
And simple miracles of thy nunnery ?"

To whom the little novice garrulous-  
ly.  
"Yea, but I know : the land was full  
of signs  
And wonders ere the coming of the  
Queen,  
So said my father, and himself was  
knight  
Of the great Table—at the founding  
of it ;  
And rode thereto from Lyonesse, and  
he said  
That as he rode, an hour or maybe  
twain  
After the sunset, down the coast, he  
heard  
Strange music, and he paused and  
turning—there,  
All down the lonely coast of Lyon-  
nesse,  
Each with a beacon-star upon his head,  
And with a wild sea-light about his  
feet,  
He saw them—headland after head-  
land flame  
Far on into the rich heart of the west :  
And in the light the white mermaiden  
swam,  
And strong man-breasted things stood  
from the sea,  
And sent a deep sea-voice thro' all the  
land,  
To which the little elves of chasm and  
cleft  
Made answer, sounding like a distant  
horn.  
So said my father—yea, and further-  
more,  
Next morning, while he past the dim-  
lit woods,

Himself beheld three spirits mad with joy  
 Come dashing down on a tall wayside flower,  
 That shook beneath them, as the thistle shakes  
 When three gray linnets wrangle for the seed :  
 And still at evenings on before his horse  
 The flickering fairy-circle wheel'd and broke  
 Flying, and link'd again, and wheel'd and broke  
 Flying, for all the land was full of life.  
 And when at last he came to Camelot,  
 A wreath of airy dancers hand-in-hand  
 Swung round the lighted lantern of the hall ;  
 And in the hall itself was such a feast  
 As never man had dream'd ; for every knight  
 Had whatsoever meat he long'd for served  
 By hands unseen ; and even as he said  
 Down in the cellars merry bloated things  
 Shoulder'd the spigot, straddling on the butts  
 While the wine ran : so glad were spirits and men  
 Before the coming of the sinful Queen."

Then spake the Queen and somewhat bitterly.  
 " Were they so glad ? ill prophets were they all,  
 Spirits and men : could none of them foresee,  
 Not even thy wise father with his signs  
 And wonders, what has fall'n upon the realm ? "

To whom the novice garrulously again.  
 " Yea, one, a bard ; of whom my father said,  
 Full many a noble war-song had he sung,  
 Ev'n in the presence of an enemy's fleet,  
 Between the steep cliff and the coming wave ;  
 And many a mystic lay of life and death  
 Had chanted on the smoky mountain-tops,  
 When round him bent the spirits of the hills  
 With all their dewy hair blown back like flame :  
 So said my father—and that night the bard  
 Sang Arthur's glorious wars, and sang the King  
 As wellnigh more than man, and rail'd at those  
 Who call'd him the false son of Gorlois :  
 For there was no man knew from whence he came ;

But after tempest, when the long wave broke  
 All down the thundering shores of Bude and Bos,  
 There came a day as still as heaven, and then  
 They found a naked child upon the sands  
 Of dark Tintagil by the Cornish sea ;  
 And that was Arthur ; and they foster'd him  
 Till he by miracle was approven king :  
 And that his grave should be a mystery  
 From all men, like his birth ; and could he find  
 A woman in her womanhood as great  
 As he was in his manhood, then, he sang,  
 The twain together well might change the world.  
 But even in the middle of his song  
 He falter'd, and his hand fell from the harp,  
 And pale he turn'd, and reel'd, and would have fall'n,  
 But that they stay'd him up ; nor would he tell  
 His vision ; but what doubt that he fore-saw  
 This evil work of Lancelot and the Queen ? "

Then thought the Queen " lo ! they have set her on,  
 Our simple-seeming Abbess and her nuns,  
 To play upon me," and bow'd her head nor spake.  
 Whereat the novice crying, with clasp'd hands,  
 Shame on her own garrulity garrulously,  
 Said the good nuns would check her gadding tongue  
 Full often, " and, sweet lady, if I seem  
 To vex an ear too sad to listen to me,  
 Unmannerly, with prattling and the tales  
 Which my good father told, check me too :  
 Nor let me shame my father's memory, one  
 Of noblest manners, tho' himself would say  
 Sir Lancelot had the noblest ; and he died,  
 Kill'd in a tilt, come next, five summers back,  
 And left me ; but of others who remain,  
 And of the two first-famed for court-esy—  
 And pray you check me if I ask amiss—  
 But pray you, which had noblest, while you moved  
 Among them, Lancelot or our lord the King ? "

Then the pale Queen look'd up and answer'd her.  
 " Sir Lancelot, as became a noble knight,

Was gracious to all ladies, and the same  
 In open battle or the tilting-field  
 Forbore his own advantage, and the  
 King  
 In open battle or the tilting-field  
 Forbore his own advantage, and these  
 two  
 Were the most nobly-mannered men of  
 all ;  
 For manners are not idle, but the fruit  
 Of loyal nature, and of noble mind."

"Yea," said the maid, "be manners  
 such fair fruit ?  
 Then Lancelot's needs must be a thou-  
 sand-fold  
 Less noble, being, as all rumor runs,  
 The most disloyal friend in all the  
 world."

To which a mournful answer made  
 the Queen,  
 "O closed about by narrowing nunnery-  
 walls,  
 What knowest thou of the world, and  
 all its lights  
 And shadows, all the wealth and all the  
 woe ?  
 If ever Lancelot, that most noble  
 knight,  
 Were for one hour less noble than him-  
 self,  
 Pray for him that he scape the doom of  
 fire,  
 And weep for her, who drew him to his  
 doom."

"Yea," said the little novice, "I pray  
 for both ;  
 But I should all as soon believe that his,  
 Sir Lancelot's, were as noble as the  
 King's,  
 As I could think, sweet lady, yours  
 would be  
 Such as they are, were you the sinful  
 Queen."

So she, like many another babbler,  
 hurt  
 Whom she would soothe, and harm'd  
 where she would heal ;  
 For here a sudden flush of wrathful  
 heat  
 Fired all the pale face of the Queen,  
 who cried,  
 "Such as thou art be never maiden  
 more  
 For ever! thou their tool, set on to  
 plague  
 And play upon, and harry me, petty spy  
 And traitress." When that storm of  
 anger brake  
 From Guinevere, aghast the maiden  
 rose,  
 White as her veil, and stood before the  
 Queen  
 As tremulously as foam upon the beach  
 Stands in a wind, ready to break and  
 fly,  
 And when the Queen had added "get  
 thee hence"

Fled frightened. Then that other left  
 alone  
 Sigh'd, and began to gather heart again,  
 Saying in herself "the simple, fearful  
 child  
 Meant nothing, but my own too-fearful  
 guilt  
 Simpler than any child, betrays itself.  
 But help me, heaven, for surely I re-  
 pent.  
 For what is true repentance but in  
 thought—  
 Not ev'n in inmost thought to think  
 again  
 The sins that made the past so pleasant  
 to us :  
 And I have sworn never to see him  
 more,  
 To see him more."

And ev'n in saying this,  
 Her memory from old habits of the  
 mind  
 Went slipping back upon the golden  
 days  
 In which she saw him first, when Lance-  
 lot came,  
 Reputed the best knight and goodliest  
 man,  
 Ambassador, to lead her to his lord  
 Arthur, and led her forth, and far  
 ahead  
 Of his and her retinue moving, they,  
 Rapt in sweet talk or lively, all on love  
 And sport and tilts and pleasure, (for  
 the time  
 Was maytime, and as yet no sin was  
 dream'd,)  
 Rode under groves that look'd a para-  
 dise  
 Of blossom, over sheets of hyacinth  
 That seem'd the heavens upbreking  
 thro' the earth,  
 And on from hill to hill, and every day  
 Beheld at noon in some delicious dale  
 The silk pavilions of King Arthur  
 raised  
 For brief repast or afternoon repose  
 By couriers gone before ; and on again,  
 Till yet once more ere set of sun they  
 saw  
 The Dragon of the great Pendragon-  
 ship,  
 That crown'd the state pavilion of the  
 King.  
 Blaze by the rushing brook or silent  
 well.

But when the Queen immersed in  
 such a trance,  
 And moving through the past uncon-  
 consciously,  
 Came to that point where first she saw  
 the King  
 Ride toward her from the city, sigh'd to  
 find  
 Her journey done, glanced at him,  
 thought him cold,  
 High, self-contain'd, and passionless  
 not like him,

'Not like my Lancelot'—while she  
 brooded thus  
 And grew half-guilty in her thoughts  
 again,  
 There rode an armed warrior to the  
 doors.  
 A murmuring whisper thro' the nun-  
 nery ran,  
 Then on a sudden a cry, "the King."  
 She sat  
 Stiff-stricken, listening; but when  
 armed feet  
 Thro' the long gallery from the outer  
 doors  
 Rang coming, prone from off her seat  
 she fell,  
 And grovell'd with her face against the  
 floor:  
 There with her milkwhite arms and  
 shadowy hair  
 She made her face a darkness from the  
 King:  
 And in the darkness heard his armed  
 feet  
 Pause by her; then came silence, then  
 a voice,  
 Monotonous and hollow like a Ghost's  
 Denouncing judgment, but tho'  
 changed the King's.

"Liest thou here so low, the child of  
 one  
 I honor'd, happy, dead before thy  
 shame?  
 Well is it that no child is born of thee.  
 The children born of thee are sword  
 and fire,  
 Red ruin, and the breaking up of laws,  
 The craft of kindred and the Godless  
 hosts  
 Of heathen swarming o'er the North-  
 ern Sea.  
 Whom I, while yet Sir Lancelot, my  
 right arm,  
 The mightiest of my knights, abode  
 with me,  
 Have everywhere about this land of  
 Christ  
 In twelve great battles ruining over-  
 thrown.  
 And knowest thou now from whence I  
 come—from him,  
 From waging bitter war with him:  
 and he,  
 That did not shun to smite me in  
 worse way,  
 Had yet that grace of courtesy in him  
 left,  
 He spared to lift his hand against the  
 King  
 Who made him knight: but many a  
 knight was slain;  
 And many more, and all his kith and  
 kin  
 Gave to him, and abode in his own  
 land.  
 And many more when Modred raised  
 revolt,  
 Forgetful of their troth and fealty,  
 gave

To Modred, and a remnant stays with  
 me.  
 And of this remnant will I leave a  
 part,  
 True men who love me still, for whom  
 I live,  
 To guard thee in the wild hour coming  
 on,  
 Lest but a hair of this low head be  
 harm'd.  
 Fear not: thou shalt be guarded till  
 my death.  
 Howbeit I know, if ancient prophecies  
 Have err'd not, that I march to meet  
 my doom.  
 Thou hast not made my life so sweet  
 to me,  
 That I the King should greatly care to  
 liv';  
 For thou hast spoilt the purpose of my  
 life.  
 Bear with me for the last time while I  
 show,  
 Ev'n for thy sake, the sin which thou  
 hast sinn'd.  
 For when the Roman left us, and their  
 law  
 Relax'd its hold upon us, and the ways  
 Were fill'd with rapine, here and there  
 a deed  
 Of prowess done redress'd a random  
 wrong.  
 But I was first of all the kings who  
 drew  
 The knighthood-errant of this realm  
 and all  
 The realms together under me, their  
 Head,  
 In that fair order of my Table Round,  
 A glorious company, the flower of  
 men,  
 To serve as model for the mighty  
 world,  
 And be the fair beginning of a time.  
 I made them lay their hands in mine  
 and swear  
 To reverence the King, as if he were  
 Their conscience, and their conscience  
 as their King,  
 To break the heathen and uphold the  
 Christ,  
 To ride abroad redressing human  
 wrongs,  
 To speak no slander, no, nor listen to  
 it,  
 To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,  
 To love one maiden only, cleave to  
 her,  
 And worship her by years of noble  
 deeds,  
 Until they won her; for indeed I  
 knew  
 Of no more subtle master under heaven  
 Than is the maiden passion for a maid,  
 Not only to keep down the base in  
 man,  
 But teach high thought, and amiable  
 words  
 And courtliness, and the desire of  
 fame

And love of truth, and all that makes  
a man.  
And all this throve until I wedded  
thee!  
Believing, 'lo mine helpmate, one to  
feel  
My purpose and rejoicing in my joy.'  
Then came thy shameful sin with  
Lancelot;  
Then came the sin of Tristram and  
Isolt;  
Then others, following these my might-  
est knights,  
And drawing foul ensample from fair  
names,  
Sinn'd also, till the loathsome opposite  
Of all my heart had destined did ob-  
tain,  
And all thro' thee! so that this life of  
mine  
I guard as God's high gift from scathe  
and wrong,  
Not greatly care to lose; but rather  
think  
How sad it were for Arthur, should he  
live,  
To sit once more within his lonely  
hall,  
And miss the wonted number of my  
knights,  
And miss to hear high talk of noble  
deeds  
As in the golden days before thy sin.  
For which of us, who might be left,  
could speak  
Of the pure heart, nor seem to glance  
at thee?  
And in thy bowers of Camelot or of  
Usk  
Thy shadow still would glide from  
room to room,  
And I should evermore be vext with  
thee  
In hanging robe or vacant ornament  
Or ghostly footfall echoing on the  
stair.  
For think not, tho' thou wouldst not  
love thy lord,  
Thy lord has wholly lost his love for  
thee.  
I am not made of so slight elements.  
Yet must I leave thee, woman, to thy  
shame.  
I hold that man the worst of public  
foes  
Who either for his own or children's  
sake,  
To save his blood from scandal, lets  
the wife  
Whom he knows false, abide and rule  
the house;  
For being thro' his cowardice allow'd  
Her station, taken everywhere for  
pure,  
She like a new disease, unknown to  
men,  
Creeps, no precaution used, among the  
crowd,  
Makes wicked lightnings of her eyes,  
and saps

The fealty of our friends, and stirs the  
pulse  
With devil's leaps, and poisons half  
the young.  
Worst of the worst were that man he  
that reigns!  
Better the King's waste hearth and  
aching heart  
Than thou reseated in thy place of  
light,  
The mockery of my people, and their  
bane."

He paused, and in the pause she  
crept an inch  
Nearer, and laid her hands about his  
feet.  
Far off a solitary trumpet blew,  
Then waiting by the doors the war-  
horse neigh'd  
As at a friend's voice, and he spake  
again.

"Yet think not that I come to urge  
thy crimes,  
I did not come to curse thee, Guine-  
vere,  
I, whose vast pity almost makes me  
die  
To see thee, laying there thy golden  
head,  
My pride in happier summers, at my  
feet.  
The wrath which forced my thoughts  
on that fierce law,  
The doom of treason and the flaming  
death,  
(When first I learnt thee hidden here)  
is past.  
The pang—which while I weigh'd thy  
heart with one  
Too wholly true to dream untruth in  
thee,  
Made my tears burn—is also past, in  
part.  
And all is past, the sin is sinn'd, and I,  
Lo! I forgive thee, as Eternal God  
Forgives: do thou for thine own soul  
the rest.  
But how to take last leave of all I  
loved?  
O golden hair, with which I used to  
play  
Not knowing! O imperial-moulded  
form,  
And beauty such as never woman  
wore,  
Until it came a kingdom's curse with  
thee—  
I cannot touch thy lips, they are not  
mine,  
But Lancelot's: nay, they never were  
the King's.  
I cannot take thy hand; that too is  
flesh,  
And in the flesh thou hast sinn'd; and  
mine own flesh,  
Here looking down on thine polluted,  
cries  
'I loathe thee:' yet not less, O Guine-  
vere.

For I was ever virgin save for thee,  
My love thro' flesh hath wrought into  
my life  
So far, that my doom is, I love thee  
still.

Let no man dream but that I love thee  
still,

Perchance, and so thou purify thy  
soul,

And so thou lean on our fair father  
Christ,

Hereafter in that world where all are  
pure

We two may meet before high God,  
and thou

Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine,  
and know

I am thine husband—not a smaller  
soul,

Nor Lancelot, nor another. Leave me  
that,

I charge thee, my last hope. Now must  
I hence.

Thro' the thick night I hear the trum-  
pet blow :

They summon me their King to lead  
mine hosts

Far down to that great battle in the  
west,

Where I must strike against the man  
they call

My sister's son—no kin of mine, who  
leagues

With lords of the White Horse, hea-  
then, and knights—

Traitors—and strike him dead, and  
meet myself

Death, or I know not what mysterious  
doom.

And thou remaining here wilt learn  
the event ;

But hither shall I never come again,  
Never lie by thy side, see thee no more,  
Farewell !”

And while she grovelling at his feet,  
She felt the King's breath wander o'er  
her neck,

And in the darkness o'er her fallen  
head,

Perceived the waving of his hands that  
blest.

Then, listening till those armed steps  
were gone,

Rose the pale Queen, and in her an-  
guish found

The casement : “ peradventure ” so she  
thought,

“ If I might see his face, and not be  
seen.”

And lo, he sat on horseback at the  
door !

And near him the sad nuns with each  
a light

Stood, and he gave them charge about  
the Queen,

To guard and foster her for evermore.  
And while he spake to these his helm  
was lower'd,

To which for crest the golden dragon  
clung

Of Britain ; so she did not see the face,  
Which then was as an angel's, but she  
saw,

Wet with the mists and smitten by the  
lights,

The Dragon of the great Pendragon-  
ship

Blaze, making all the night a steam of  
fire.

And even then he turn'd ; and more  
and more

The moony vapor rolling round the  
King,

Who seem'd the phantom of a Giant  
in it,

Enwound him fold by fold, and made  
him gray

And grayer, till himself became as  
mist

Before her, moving ghostlike to his  
doom.

Then she stretch'd out her arms and  
cried aloud

“ O Arthur ! ” there her voice brake  
suddenly,

Then—as a stream that spouting from  
a cliff

Falls in mid air, but gathering at the  
base

Re-makes itself, and flashes down the  
vale—

Went on in passionate utterance.

“ Gone—my lord !  
Gone thro' my sin to slay and to be  
slain !

And he forgave me, and I could not  
speak.

Farewell ? I should have answer'd his  
farewell.

His mercy choked me. Gone, my lord  
the King,

My own true lord ! how dare I call him  
mine ?

The shadow of another cleaves to me,  
And makes me one pollution : he, the  
King,

Call'd me polluted : shall I kill myself ?  
What help in that ? I cannot kill my  
sin,

If soul be soul ; nor can I kill my  
shame ;

No, nor by living can I live it down.  
The days will grow to weeks, the weeks  
to months,

The months will add themselves and  
make the years,

The years will roll into the centuries,  
And mine will ever be a name of scorn.

I must not dwell on that defeat of  
fame.

Let the world be ; that is but of the  
world.

What else ? what hope ? I think there  
was a hope,

Except he mock'd me when he spake  
of hope ;

His hope he call'd it; but he never  
 mocks,  
 For mockery is the fume of little  
 hearts.  
 And blessed be the King, who hath  
 forgiven  
 My wickedness to him, and left me  
 hope  
 That in mine own heart I can live down  
 sin  
 And be his mate hereafter in the  
 heavens  
 Before high God. Ah great and gentle  
 lord,  
 Who wast, as is the conscience of a  
 saint  
 Among his warring senses, to thy  
 knights—  
 To whom my false voluptuous pride,  
 that took  
 Full easily all impressions from below,  
 Would not look up, or half-despised  
 the height  
 To which I would not or I could not  
 climb—  
 I thought I could not breathe in that  
 fine air  
 That pure severity of perfect light—  
 I wanted warmth and color which I  
 found  
 In Lancelot—now I see thee what  
 thou art,  
 Thou art the highest and most human  
 too,  
 Not Lancelot, nor another. Is there  
 none  
 Will tell the King I love him tho' so  
 late?  
 Now—ere he goes to the great Battle?  
 none:  
 Myself must tell him in that purer life,  
 But now it were too daring. Ah my  
 God,  
 What might I not have made of thy  
 fair world,  
 Had I but loved thy highest creature  
 here?  
 It was my duty to have loved the high-  
 est;  
 It surely was my profit had I known;  
 It would have been my pleasure had I  
 seen.  
 We needs must love the highest when  
 we see it,  
 Not Lancelot, nor another."

Here her hand  
 Grasp'd, made her veil her eyes: she  
 look'd and saw  
 The novice, weeping, suppliant, and  
 said to her  
 "Yea, little maid, for am I not for-  
 given?"  
 Then glancing up beheld the holy nuns  
 All round her, weeping; and her heart  
 was loosed  
 Within her, and she wept with these  
 and said.

"Ye know me then, that wicked one,  
 who broke

The vast design and purpose of the  
 King.  
 O shut me round with narrowing nun-  
 nery-walls,  
 Meek maidens, from the voices crying  
 'shame.'  
 I must not scorn myself: he loves me  
 still.  
 Let no one dream but that he loves me  
 still.  
 So let me, if you do not shudder at me  
 Nor shun to call me sister, dwell with  
 you;  
 Wear black and white, and be a nun  
 like you;  
 Fast with your fasts, not feasting with  
 your feasts;  
 Grieve with your griefs, not grieving at  
 your joys,  
 But not rejoicing; mingle with your  
 rites;  
 Pray and be pray'd for; lie before your  
 shrines;  
 Do each low office of your holy house;  
 Walk your dim cloister, and distribute  
 dole  
 To poor sick people, richer in his eyes  
 Who ransom'd us, and haler too than I;  
 And treat their loathsome hurts and  
 heal mine own;  
 And so wear out in almsdeed and in  
 prayer  
 The sombre close of that voluptuous  
 day,  
 Which wrought the ruin of my lord the  
 King."

She said: they took her to them-  
 selves; and she  
 Still hoping, fearing "is it yet too  
 late?"  
 Dwelt with them, till in time their Ab-  
 bess died.  
 Then she, for her good deeds and her  
 pure life,  
 And for the power of ministration in  
 her,  
 And likewise for the high rank she had  
 borne,  
 Was chosen Abbess, there, an Abbess,  
 lived  
 For three brief years, and there, an  
 Abbess, past  
 To where beyond these voices there is  
 peace.

#### THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

THAT story which the bold Sir Bedi-  
 vere,  
 First made and latest left of all the  
 knights,  
 Told, when the man was no more than  
 a voice  
 In the white winter of his age, to those  
 With whom he dwelt, new faces, other  
 minds.

Before that last weird battle in the west  
 There came on Arthur sleeping, Gawain  
 kill'd  
 In Lancelot's war, the ghost of Gawain  
 blown  
 Along a wandering wind, and past his  
 ear  
 Went shrilling "Hollow, hollow all de-  
 light!  
 Hail, king! to-morrow thou shalt pass  
 away.  
 Farewell! there is an isle of rest for  
 thee.  
 And I am blown along a wandering  
 wind,  
 And hollow, hollow, hollow all de-  
 light."  
 And fainter onward, like wild birds  
 that change  
 Their season in the night and wail their  
 way  
 From cloud to cloud, down the long  
 wind the dream  
 Shril'd; but in going mingled with dim  
 cries  
 Far in the moonlit haze among the hills,  
 As of some lonely city sack'd by night,  
 When all is lost, and wife and child  
 with wail  
 Pass to new lords; and Arthur woke  
 and call'd,  
 "Who spake? A dream. O light upon  
 the wind.  
 Thine, Gawain, was the voice—are  
 these dim cries  
 Thine? or doth all that haunts the  
 waste and wild  
 Mourn, knowing it will go along with  
 me?"

This heard the bold Sir Bedivere and  
 spake:  
 "O me, my king, let pass whatever will,  
 Elves, and the harmless glamour of the  
 field;  
 But in their stead thy name and glory  
 cling  
 To all high places like a golden cloud  
 For ever: but as yet thou shalt not pass.  
 Light was Gawain in life, and light in  
 death  
 Is Gawain, for the ghost is as the man;  
 And care not thou for dreams from  
 him, but rise—  
 I hear the steps of Modred in the west,  
 And with him many of thy people and  
 knights  
 Once thine, whom thou hast loved, but  
 grosser grown  
 Than heathen, spitting at their vows  
 and thee.  
 Right well in heart they know thee for  
 the king.  
 Arise, go forth and conquer as of old."

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-  
 vere:  
 "Far other is this battle in the west  
 Whereto we move, than when we strove  
 in youth,

And thrust the heathen from the Roman  
 wall,  
 And shook him thro' the north. Ill  
 doom is mine  
 To war against my people and my  
 knights.  
 The king who fights his people fights  
 himself.  
 And they my knights, who loved me  
 once, the stroke  
 That strikes them dead is as my death  
 to me.  
 Yet let us hence, and find or feel a way  
 Thro' this blind haze, which ever since  
 I saw  
 One lying in the dust at Almesbury,  
 Hath folded in the passes of the world "

Then rose the king and moved his  
 host by night,  
 And ever push'd Sir Modred, league by  
 league,  
 Back to the sunset bound of Lyon-  
 nesse—  
 A land of old upheaven from the abyss  
 By fire, to sink into the abyss again;  
 Where fragments of forgotten peoples  
 dwelt,  
 And the long mountains ended in a  
 coast  
 Of ever-shifting sand, and far away  
 The phantom circle of a moaning sea.  
 There the pursuer could pursue no  
 more,  
 And he that fled no further fly the  
 king;  
 And there, that day when the great  
 light of heaven  
 Burn'd at his lowest in the rolling year,  
 On the waste sand by the waste sea  
 they closed.  
 Nor ever yet had Arthur fought a fight  
 Like this last, dim, weird battle of the  
 west.  
 A death white mist slept over sand and  
 sea:  
 Whereof the chill, to him who breathed  
 it, drew  
 Down with his blood, till all his heart  
 was cold  
 With formless fear: and ev'n on Arthur  
 fell  
 Confusion, since he saw not whom he  
 fought,  
 For friend and foe were shadows in the  
 mist,  
 And friend slew friend not knowing  
 whom he slew;  
 And some had visions out of golden  
 youth,  
 And some beheld the faces of old ghosts  
 Look in upon the battle; and in the mist  
 Was many a noble deed, many a base,  
 And chance and craft and strength in  
 single fights,  
 And ever and anon with host to host  
 Shocks, and the splintering spear, the  
 hard mail hewn,  
 Shield-breakings, and the clash of  
 brands, the crash

Of battle-axes on shatter'd helms, and shrieks  
 After the Christ, of those who falling down  
 Looked up for heaven, and only saw the mist ;  
 And shouts of heathen and the traitor knights,  
 Oaths, insult, filth, and monstrous blasphemies,  
 Sweat, writhings, anguish, laboring of the lungs  
 In that close mist, and cryings for the light,  
 Moans of the dying, and voices of the dead.

Last, as by some one death-bed after wail  
 Of suffering, silence follows, or thro' death  
 Or deathlike swoon, thus over all that shore,  
 Save for some whisper of the seething seas,  
 A dead hush fell ; but when the dolorous day  
 Grew drearier toward twilight falling, came  
 A bitter wind, clear from the North, and blew  
 The mist aside, and with that wind the tide  
 Rose, and the pale king glanced across the field  
 Of battle : but no man was moving there ;  
 Nor any cry of Christian heard thereon,  
 Nor yet of heathen ; only the wan wave  
 Brake in among dead faces, to and fro  
 Swaying the helpless hands, and up and down  
 Tumbling the hollow helmets, of the fallen,  
 And shiver'd brands that once had fought with Rome,  
 And rolling far along the gloomy shores  
 The voice of days of old and days to be.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere,  
 And whiter than the mist that all day long  
 Had held the field of battle was the King :

"Hearest thou this great voice that shakes the world,  
 And wastes the narrow realm whereon we move,  
 And beats upon the faces of the dead,  
 My dead, as tho' they had not died for me ?—

O Bedivere, for on my heart hath fall'n  
 Confusion, till I know not what I am,  
 Nor whence I am, nor whether I be king.  
 Behold, I seem but king among the dead."

Then spake the bold Sir Bedivere :  
 "My King,

King everywhere ! and so the dead have kings,  
 There also will I worship thee as king.  
 Yet still thy life is whole, and still I live  
 Who love thee ; but who hates thee, he that brought  
 The heathen back among us, yonder stands,  
 Modred, unharm'd, the traitor of thine house."

Then spake the King : "My house hath been my doom.  
 But call not thou this traitor of my house  
 Who hath but dwelt beneath one roof with me.  
 My house are rather they who swear my vows,  
 Yea, even while they brake them, own'd me king.  
 And well for thee, saying in my dark hour,  
 When all the purport of my throne hath fail'd,  
 That quick or dead thou holdest me for king.  
 King am I, whatsoever be their cry ;  
 And one last act of kinghood shalt thou see  
 Yet, ere I pass." And uttering this the king  
 Made at the man : then Modred smote his liege  
 Hard on that helm which many a heathen sword  
 Had beaten thin ; while Arthur at one blow,  
 Striking the last stroke with Excalibur,  
 Slew him, and all but slain himself, he fell.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd  
 Among the mountains by the winter sea ;  
 Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,  
 Hall fall'n in Lyonesse about their lord,  
 King Arthur. Then, because his wound was deep,  
 The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,  
 And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,  
 A broken chancel with a broken cross,  
 That stood on a dark strait of barren land :  
 On one side lay the Ocean, and on one  
 Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :  
 "The sequel of to-day unsolders all  
 The goodliest fellowship of famous knights  
 Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep

They sleep—the men I loved. I think  
 that we  
 Shall never more, at any future time,  
 Delight our souls with talk of knightly  
 deeds,  
 Walking about the gardens and the  
 halls  
 Of Camelot, as in the days that were.  
 I perish by this people which I made,—  
 Tho' Merlin sware that I should come  
 again  
 To rule once more; but let what will  
 be, be.  
 I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm  
 That without help I cannot last till  
 morn.  
 Thou therefore take my brand Excali-  
 bur,  
 Which was my pride: for thou remem-  
 berest how  
 In those old days, one summer noon,  
 an arm  
 Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,  
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-  
 ful,  
 Holding the sword—and how I row'd  
 across  
 And took it, and have worn it, like a  
 king;  
 And, wheresoever I am sung or told  
 In aftertime, this also shall be known:  
 But now delay not: take Excalibur,  
 And fling him far into the middle  
 mere:  
 Watch what thou seest, and lightly  
 bring me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedi-  
 vere:  
 "It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee  
 thus,  
 Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the  
 helm—  
 A little thing may harm a wounded  
 man;  
 Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,  
 Watch what I see, and lightly bring  
 thee word."

So saying from the ruin'd shrine he  
 sept,  
 And in the moon athwart the place of  
 tombs,  
 Where lay the mighty bones of ancient  
 men,  
 Old knights, and over them the sea-  
 winds sang  
 Shri!ll, chill with flakes of foam. He,  
 stepping down  
 By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed  
 rock,  
 Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Ex-  
 calibur,  
 And o'er him, drawing it, the winter  
 moon,  
 Brightening the skirts of a long cloud,  
 ran forth  
 And sparkled keen with frost against  
 the hilt:

For all the haft twinkled with diamond  
 sparks,  
 Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-  
 work  
 Of subtest jewelry. He gazed so long  
 That both his eyes were dazzled as he  
 stood,  
 This way and that dividing the swift  
 mind,  
 In act to throw: but at the last it  
 seem'd  
 Better to leave Excalibur concea'd  
 There in the many-knotted waterflags,  
 That whistled stiff and dry about the  
 marge.  
 So strode he back slow to the wounded  
 King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-  
 vere:  
 "Hast thou perform'd my mission  
 which I gave?  
 What is it thou hasseen? or what hast  
 heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedi-  
 vere:  
 "I heard the ripple washing in the  
 reeds,  
 And the wild water lapping on the  
 crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint  
 and pale:  
 "Thou hast betray'd thy nature and  
 thy name,  
 Not rendering true answer, as be-  
 seem'd  
 Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight:  
 For surer sign had follow'd, either  
 hand,  
 Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.  
 This is a shameful thing for men to  
 lie.  
 Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go  
 again,  
 As thou art lief and dear, and do the  
 thing  
 I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring  
 me word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second  
 time  
 Across the ridge, and paced beside the  
 mere,  
 Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in  
 thought;  
 But when he saw the wonder of the  
 hilt,  
 How curiously and strangely chased,  
 he smote  
 His palms together, and he cried  
 aloud:

"And if indeed I cast the brand  
 away,  
 Surely a precious thing, one worthy  
 note,  
 Should thus be lost for ever from the  
 earth,

Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.

What good should follow this, if this were done?

What harm, undone? Deep harm to disobey,

Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.

Were it well to obey then, if a king demand

An act unprofitable, against himself? The King is sick, and knows not what he does.

What record, or what relic of my lord Should be to aftertime, but empty breath

And rumors of a doubt? But were this kept,

Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,

Some one might show it at a joust of arms,

Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,

Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.

Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps

Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'

So might some old man speak in the aftertime

To all the people, winning reverence. But now much honor and much fame were lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,

And hid Excalibur the second time, And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:

"What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:

"I heard the water lapping on the crag,

And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:

"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue, Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!

Authority forgets a dying king, Laid widow'd of the power in his eye

That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights

In whom should meet the offices of all, Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.

Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice, And the third time May prosper, get thee hence:

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,

I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,

And leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged

Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,

And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand

Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,

And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,

Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,

Seen where the moving isles of winter shock

By night, with noises of the northern sea.

So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur: But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the mere

And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:

"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.

Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:

"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,

Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,

Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,

So great a miracle as yonder hilt. Then with both hands I flung him,

wheeling him;

But when I look'd again, behold an arm,

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful.

That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the mere."

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard:

"My end draws nigh; 't is time that I were gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight.

And bear me to the margin; yet I fear My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he  
half rose,

Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,  
And looking wistfully with wide blue  
eyes

As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere  
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,  
And would have spoken, but he found  
not words ;

Then took with care, and kneeling on  
one knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the lan-  
guid hands,

And rising bore him thro' the place of  
tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted  
hard,

Like one that feels a nightmare on his  
bed

When all the house is mute. So sigh'd  
the King,

Muttering and murmuring at his ear  
" Quick, quick !

I fear it is too late, and I shall die."

But the other swiftly strode from ridge  
to ridge,

Cloth'd with his breath, and looking, as  
he walk'd,

Larger than human on the frozen hills.  
He heard the deep behind him, and a  
cry

Before. His own thought drove him  
like a goad.

Dry clash'd his harness in the icy  
caves

And barren chasms, and all to left and  
right

The bare black cliff clang'd round him,  
as he based

His feet on juts of slippery crag that  
rang

Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed  
heels—

And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,  
And the long glories of the winter  
moon.

Then saw they how there hove a  
dusky barge,

Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to  
stern,

Beneath them; and descending they  
were ware

That all the decks were dense with  
stately forms,

Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a  
dream—by these

Three Queens with crowns of gold :  
and from them rose

A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,  
And, as it were one voice, and agony

Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills  
All night in a waste land, where no  
one comes,

Or hath come; since the making of the  
world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, " Place me  
in the barge ;"

So to the barge they came. There  
those three Queens

Put forth their hands, and took the  
King, and wept.

But she, that rose the tallest of them  
all

And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,  
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and  
chafed his hands,

And call'd him by his name, complain-  
ing loud,

And dropping bitter tears against his  
brow

Striped with dark blood : for all his  
face was white

And colorless, and like the wither'd  
moon

Smote by the fresh beam of the spring-  
ing east :

And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd  
with drops

Of onset; and the light and lustrous  
curls—

That made his forehead like a rising  
sun

High from the dais-throne—were  
parch'd with dust ;

Or, clotted into points and hanging  
loose,

Mix'd with the knightly growth that  
fringed his lips.

So like a shatter'd column lay the  
King ;

Not like that Arthur who, with lance  
in rest,

From spur to plume a star of tourna-  
ment,

Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and  
charged

Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedi-  
vere :

" Ah ! my Lord Arthur, whither shall  
I go ?

Where shall I hide my forehead and  
my eyes ?

For now I see the true old times are  
dead,

When every morning brought a noble  
chance,

And every chance brought out a noble  
knight.

Such times have been not since the  
light that led

The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.  
But now the whole Round Table is dis-  
solved

Which was an image of the mighty  
world ;

And I, the last, go forth companionless,  
And the days darken round me, and  
the years,

Among new men, strange faces, other  
minds."

And slowly answered Arthur from  
the barge :

" The old order changeth, yielding  
place to new,

And God fulfils himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt  
the world.

Comfort thyself : what comfort is in  
me ?

I have lived my wife, and that which  
I have done

May He within himself make pure !  
but thou,

If thou shouldst never see my face  
again,

Pray for my soul. More thing : are  
wrought by prayer

Than this world dreams of. Where-  
fore, let thy voice

Rise like a fountain for me night and  
day.

For what are men better than sheep or  
goats

That nourish a blind life within the  
brain,

If, knowing God, they lift not hands  
of prayer

Both for themselves and those who  
call them friend ?

For so the whole round earth is every  
way

Bound by gold chains about the feet  
of God.

But now farewell. I am going a long  
way

With these thou seest—if indeed I go  
(For all my mind is clouded with a  
doubt)—

To the island-valley of Avilion ;

Where falls not hail, or rain, or any  
snow,

Nor ever wind blows loudly ; but it  
lies

Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with  
orchard-lawns

And bowery hollows crown'd with  
summer sea,

Where I will heal me of my grievous  
wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar  
and sail

Moved from the brink, like some full-  
breasted swan

That, fluting a wild carol ere her  
death,

Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes  
the flood

With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir  
Bedivere

Revolving many memories, till the hull  
Look'd one black dot against the verge  
of dawn,

And on the mere the wailing died  
away.

At length he groan'd, and turning  
slowly clomb

The last hardfootstep of that iron crag  
Thence mark'd the black hull moving  
yet and cried,

"He passes to be king among the dead  
And after healing of his grievous  
wound

He comes again ; but—if he come no  
more—

O me, be you dark Queens in yon black  
boat,

Who shriek'd and wail'd, the three  
whereat we gazed

On that high day, when, clothed with  
living light,

They stood before his throne in silence,  
friends

Of Arthur, who should help him at his  
need ?"

Then from the dawn it seem'd there  
came, but faint

'As from beyond the limit of the world,  
Like the last echo born of a great cry,

Sounds, as if some fair city were one  
voice

Around a king returning from his  
wars.

Thereat once more he moved about,  
and clomb

E'en to the highest he could climb, and  
saw,

Straining his eyes beneath an arch of  
hand,

Or thought he saw, the speck that bare  
the king,

Down that long water opening on the  
deep

Somewhere far off, pass on, and on,  
and go

From less to less and vanish into light.  
And the new sun rose bringing the  
new year.

#### IN THE GARDEN AT SWAINSTON.

NIGHTINGALES warbled without,

Within was weeping for thee :

Shadows of three dead men

Walk'd in the walks with me,

Shadows of three dead men, and thou  
wast one of the three.

Nightingales sang in his woods :

The Master was far away :

Nightingales warbled and sang

Of a passion that lasts but a day :

Still in the house in his coffin the Prince  
of courtesy lay.

Two dead men have I known

In courtesy like to thee :

Two dead men have I loved

With a love that ever will be :

Three dead men have I loved, and thou  
art last of the three.

#### THE VOICE AND THE PEAK.

THE voice and the Peak

Far over summit and lawn,

The lone glow and long roar

Green-rushing from the rosy thrones of  
dawn !

All night have I heard the voice  
Rave over the rocky bar,  
But thou wert silent in heaven,  
Above thee glided the star.

Hast thou no voice, O Peak,  
That standest high above all?  
"I am the voice of the Peak,  
I roar and rave for I fall.

"A thousand voices go  
To North, South, East and West,  
They leave the heights and are trou-  
bled,  
And moan and sink to their rest.

"The fields are fair beside them,  
The chestnut towers in his bloom;  
But they—they feel the desire of the  
deep—  
Fall, and follow their doom.

"The deep has power on the height,  
And the height has power on the deep;  
They are raised for ever and ever,  
And sink again into sleep."

Not raised for ever and ever,  
But when their cycle is o'er,  
The valley, the voice, the peak, the  
star,  
Pass, and are found no more.

The Peak is high and flush'd  
At his highest with sunrise fire:  
The peak is high, and the stars are high,  
And the thought of a man is higher.

A voice below the voice,  
And a height beyond the height  
Our hearing is not hearing,  
And our seeing is not sight.

The voice and the Peak  
Far into heaven withdrawn,  
The lone glow and the long roar  
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones  
of dawn!

## TO THE QUEEN.

### EPILOGUE TO THE IDYLS.

O LOYAL to the royal in thyself,  
And loyal to thy land, as this to thee—  
Bear witness, that memorable day,  
When, pale as yet, and fever-worn, the  
Prince  
Who scarce had pluck'd his flickering  
life again  
From half-way down the shadow of the  
grave,  
Past with thee thro' thy people and  
their love,  
And London roll'd one tide of joy thro'  
all  
Her trebled millions, and loud leagues  
of man

And welcome! witness, too, the silen-  
cry,  
The prayer of many a race and creed,  
and clime—  
Thunderless lightnings striking under  
sea  
From sunset and sunrise of all thy  
realm,  
And that true North, whereof we late-  
ly heard  
A strain to shame us "keep you to  
yourselves:  
So loyal is too costly! friends—your  
love  
Is but a burden: loose the bond, and  
go."  
Is this the tone of empire? here the  
faith  
That made us rulers? this, indeed, her  
voice  
And meaning, whom the roar of Hou-  
goumont  
Left mightiest of all peoples under  
heaven?  
What shock has fool'd her since, that  
she should speak  
So feebly? wealthier—wealthier—hour  
by hour!  
The voice of Britain, or a sinking land,  
Some third-rate isle half-lost among  
her seas?  
There rang her voice, when the full  
city peal'd  
Thee and thy Prince! The loyal to their  
crown  
Are loyal to their own far sons, who  
love  
Our ocean-empire with her boundless  
homes  
For ever-broadening England, and her  
throne  
In our vast Orient, and one isle, one isle,  
That knows not her own greatness: if  
she knows  
And dreads it we are fall'n.—But  
thou, my Queen,  
Not for itself, but thro' thy living love  
For one to whom I made it o'er his  
grave  
Sacred, accept this old imperfect tale,  
New-old, and shadowing Sense at war  
with Soul  
Rather than that gray king, whose  
name, a ghost  
Streams like a cloud, man-shaped, from  
mountain peak,  
And cleaves to cairn and cromlech  
still: or him  
Of Geoffrey's book, or him of Malleor's,  
one  
Touch'd by the adulterous finger of a  
time  
That hover'd between war and wanton-  
ness,  
And crownings and dethronements:  
take withal  
The poet's blessing, and his trust that  
Heaven  
Will blow the tempest in the distance  
back

From thine and ours : for some are sacred, who mark,  
 Or wisely or unwisely, signs of storm,  
 Waverings of every vane with every wind,  
 And wordy trucklings to the transient hour,  
 And fierce or careless looseners of the faith,  
 And Softness breeding scorn of simple life,  
 Or Cowardice, the child of lust for gold,  
 Or Labor, with a groan and not a voice,  
 Or Art, with poisonous honey stol'n from France,  
 And that which knows, but careful for itself,  
 And that which knows not, ruling that which knows  
 To its own harm : the goal of this great world  
 Lies beyond sight : yet—if our slowly-grown  
 And crown'd Republic's crowning common-sense,  
 That saved her many times, not fail—their fears  
 Are morning shadows huger than the shapes  
 That cast them, not those gloomier which forego  
 The darkness of that battle in the West,  
 Where all of high and holy dies away.

#### A WELCOME TO THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF EDINBURGH.

March, 1874.

##### I.

THE Son of him with whom we strove  
 for power—  
 Whose will is lord thro' all his world-domain—  
 Who made the serf a man, and burst his chain—  
 Has given our Prince his own Imperial Flower,

Alexandrovna.

And welcome, Russian flower, a people's pride,  
 To Britain, when her flowers begin to blow !  
 From love to love, from home to home you go,  
 From mother unto mother, stately bride,

Marie-Alexandrovna.

##### II.

The golden news along the steppes is blown,  
 And at thy name the Tartar tents are stirred :  
 Elburz and all the Caucasus have heard ;

And all the sultry palms of India known,

Alexandrovna.

The voice of our universal sea,  
 On capes of Afric as on cliffs of Kent,

The Maoris and that Isle of Content,  
 And loyal pines of Canada murmur thee,

Marie-Alexandrovna.

##### III.

Fair empires branching, both, in lusty life !—

Yet Harold's England fell to Norman swords :

Yet thine own land has bow'd to Tartar hordes

Since English Harold gave its throne a wife,

Alexandrovna.

For thrones and peoples are as waifs that swing,

And float or fall, in endless ebb and flow ;

But who love best have best the grace to know

That Love by right divine is deathless king,

Marie-Alexandrovna !

##### IV.

And Love has led thee to the stranger land,

Where men are bold and strongly say their say :—

See, empire upon empire smiles to-day,

As thou with thy young lover hand in hand,

Alexandrovna !

So now thy fuller life is in the West,

Whose hand at home was gracious to thy poor :

Thy name was blest within the narrow door ;

Here, also, Marie, shall thy name be blest,

Marie-Alexandrovna !

##### V.

Shall fears and jealous hatreds flame again ?

Or at thy coming, Princess, everywhere,

The blue heaven break, and some diviner air

Breathe thro' the world and change the hearts of men,

Alexandrovna ?

But hearts that change not, love that cannot cease,

And peace be yours, the peace of soul in soul !

And howsoever this wide world may roll,

Between your peoples truth and manifold peace,

Alfred—Alexandrovna !

# QUEEN MARY.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

### Queen Mary.

Philip, *King of Naples and Sicily, afterwards King of Spain.*

The Princess Elizabeth.

Reginald Pole, *Cardinal and Papal Legate.*

Simon Renard, *Spanish Ambassador.*

Le Sieur de Noailles, *French Ambassador.*

Thomas Cranmer, *Archbishop of Canterbury.*

Sir Nicholas Heath, *Archbishop of York; Lord Chancellor after Gardiner.*

Edward Courtenay, *Earl of Devon.*

Lord William Howard, *afterwards Lord Howard and Lord High Admiral.*

Lord Williams of Thame.

Lord Paget.

Lord Petre.

Stephen Gardiner, *Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor.*

Edmund Bonner, *Bishop of London.*

Thomas Thirlby, *Bishop of Ely.*

Sir Thomas Wyatt, } *Insurrectionary*  
Sir Thomas Stafford } *leaders.*

Sir Ralph Bagenhall.

Sir Robert Southwell.

Sir Henry Redingfield.

Sir William Cecil.

Sir Thomas White, *Lord Mayor of London.*

The Duke of Alva, } *Attending on*  
The Count de Feria, } *Philip.*

Peter Martyr.

Father Cole.

Father Bourne.

Villa Garcia.

Soto.

Captain Brett, } *Adherents of Wyatt,*  
Antony Knyvett, }

Peters, *Gentleman of Lord Howard.*

Roger, *Servant to Noailles.*

William, *Servant to Wyatt.*

Steward of Household to the Princess

Old Nokes and Nokes. (Elizabeth.)

Marchioness of Exeter, *Mother of*  
Courtenay.

Lady Clarence, } *Ladies in*  
Lady Magdalen Dacres, } *waiting to*  
Alice, } *the Queen*

Maid of Honor to the Princess Elizabeth.

Joan, } *Two Country Wives.* [beth.

Tib, }

Lords and other Attendants, Members of the Privy Council, Members of Parliament, two Gentlemen, Aldermen, Citizens, Peasants, Ushers, Messengers, Guards, Pages, &c.

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—Aldgate richly decorated.  
Crowd. Marshalmen.

*Marshalman.* Stand back, keep a clear lane. When will her Majesty pass, sayst thou? why now, even now; wherefore draw back your heads and your horns before I break them, and make what noise you will with your tongues, so it be not treason. Long live Queen Mary, the lawful and legitimate daughter of Harry the Eighth. Shout, knaves!

*Citizens.* Long live Queen Mary!

1 *Cit.* That's a hard word, legitimate; what does it mean?

2 *Cit.* It means a bastard.

3 *Cit.* Nay, it means true-born.

1 *Cit.* Why, didn't the Parliament make her a bastard? [beth.

2 *Cit.* No; it was the lady Eliza-

3 *Cit.* That was after, man; that was after.

1 *Cit.* Then which is the bastard?

2 *Cit.* Troth, they be both bastards by Act of Parliament and Council.

3 *Cit.* Ay, the Parliament can make every true-born man of us a bastard. Old Nokes, can't it make thee a bastard? thou shouldst know, for thou art as white as three Christmasses.

O. *Nokes (dreamily).* Who's a-passing? King Edward or King Richard?

3 *Cit.* No, old Nokes.

O. *Nokes.* It's Harry!

3 *Cit.* It's Queen Mary.

O. *Nokes.* The blessed Mary's a-passing! [Falls on his knees.

*Nokes.* Let father alone, my masters! he's past your questioning.

3 *Cit.* Answer thou for him, then! thou art no such cockerel thyself, for

thou was born i' the tail end of old Harry the Seventh.

*Nokes.* Eh! that was before bastard-making began. I was born true man at five in the forenoon i' the tail of old Harry, and so they can't make me a bastard.

*3 Cit.* But if Parliament can make the Queen a bastard, why, it follows all the more that they can make thee one, who are fray'd i' the knees, and out at elbows, and bald o' the back, and bursten at the toes, and down at heels.

*Nokes.* I was born of a true man and a ring'd wife, and I can't argue upon it; but I and my old woman 'ud burn upon it, that would we.

*Marshallman.* What are you cackling of bastardy under the Queen's own nose? I'll have you flogg'd and burnt too, by the Rood I will.

*1 Cit.* He swears by the Rood. Whew!

*2 Cit.* Hark! the trumpets.

*[The procession passes, Mary and Elizabeth riding side by side, and disappears under the gate.]*

*Citizens.* Long live Queen Mary! down with all traitors! God save Her Grace; and death to Northumberland!

*[Exeunt.]*

*Manent Two Gentlemen.*

*1 Gent.* By God's light a noble creature, right royal.

*2 Gent.* She looks comelier than ordinary to-day; but to my mind the Lady Elizabeth is the more noble and royal.

*1 Gent.* I mean the lady Elizabeth. Did you hear (I have a daughter in her service who reported it) that she met the Queen at Wanstead with five hundred horse, and the Queen (tho' some say they be much divided) took her hand, call'd her sweet sister, and kiss'd not her alone, but all the ladies of her following.

*2 Gent.* Ay, that was in her hour of joy, there will be plenty to sunder and unsister them again; this Gardiner for one, who is to be made Lord Chancellor, and will pounce like a wild beast out of his cage to worry Cranmer.

*1 Gent.* And furthermore, my daughter said that when there rose a talk of the late rebellion, she spoke even of Northumberland pitifully, and of the good Lady Jane as a poor innocent child who had but obeyed her father; and furthermore, she said that no one in her time should be burnt for heresy.

*2 Gent.* Well, sir, I look for happy times.

*1 Gent.* There is but one thing against them. I know not if you know.

*2 Gent.* I suppose you touch upon the rumor that Charles, the master of the world, has offer'd her his son Phil-

ip, the Pope and the Devil. I trust it is but a rumor.

*1 Gent.* She is going now to the Tower to loose the prisoners there, and among them Courtenay, to be made Earl of Devon, of royal blood, of splendid feature, whom the council and all her people wish her to marry. May it be so, for we are many of us Catholics, but few Papists, and the Hot Gospel lers will go mad upon it.

*2 Gent.* Was she not betroth'd in her babyhood to the Great Emperor himself.

*1 Gent.* Ay but he's too old.

*2 Gent.* And again to her cousin Reginald Pole, now Cardinal, but I hear that he too is full of aches and broken before his day.

*1 Gent.* O, the Pope could dispense with his Cardinalate, and his achage, and his breakage, if that were all; but will you not follow the procession?

*2 Gent.* No; I have seen enough for this day.

*1 Gent.* Well. I shall follow; if I can get near enough I shall judge with my own eyes whether Her Grace incline to this splendid scion of Plantagenet.

*[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—A room in Lambeth Palace.

*Cran.* To Strasburg, Antwerp, Frankfurt, Zurich, Worms, Geneva, Basle—our Bishops from their sees

Or fled, they say, or flying—Poinet, Barlow,

Bale, Scory, Coverdale; besides the Deans *[Wells—*

Of Christchurch, Durham, Exeter and Ailmer and Bullingham, and hundreds more;

So they report: I shall be left alone. No; Hooper, Ridley, Latimer will not fly.

*Enter Peter Martyr.*

*Mart.* Fly Cranmer! were there nothing else, your name

Stands first of those who signed the Letters Patent *[Jane.]*

That gave her royal crown to Lady Cran. Stand first it may, but it was written last: *[cil, sign'd]*

Those that are now her Privy Council. Before me: nay, the judges had pronounced

That our young Edward might bequeath the crown *[will.]*

Of England, putting by his father's Yet I stood out, till Edward sent for me. *[eyes]*

The wan boy-king, with his fast-fading Fixt hard on mine, his frail, transparent hand, *[gripping mine,]*

Damp with the sweat of death, and Whisper'd me, if I loved him not to yield *[wolf]*

His Church of England to the Papal And Mary; then I could no more—I sign'd,

Nay, for bare shame of inconsistency,  
She cannot pass her traitor council by,  
To make me headless.

Mart. That might be forgiven.  
I tell you, fly, my Lord. You do not  
own

The bodily presence in the Eucharist,  
Their wafer and perpetual sacrifice.  
Your creed will be your death.

Cran. Step after step,  
Thro' many voices crying right and  
left, [church,  
Have I climb'd back into the primal  
And stand within the porch, and Christ  
with me: [faith.

My flight were such a scandal to the  
The downfall of so many simple souls,  
I dare not leave my post.

Mart. But you divorced  
Queen Catharine and her father; hence,  
her hate

Will burn till you are burn'd.

Cran. I cannot help it.  
The Canonists and Schoolmen were  
with me.

"Thou shalt not wed thy brother's  
wife."—'Tis written,

"They shall be childless." True, Mary  
was born, [a bride

But France would not accept her for  
As being born from incest; and this  
wrought [you know,

Upon the king; and child by child,  
Were momentary sparkles out as  
quick [his doubts

Almost as kindled; and he brought  
And fears to me. Peter, I'll swear for  
him

He did believe the bond incestuous.  
But wherefore am I trenching on the  
time [steps a mile

That should already have seen your  
From me and Lambeth? God be with  
you! Go

Mart. Ah, but how fierce a letter  
you wrote against [you  
Their superstition when they slander'd  
For setting up a mass at Canterbury.

To please the Queen.

Cran. It was a wheedling monk  
Set up the mass.

Mart. I know it, my good Lord.  
But you so bubbled over with hot  
terms

Of Satan, liars, blasphemy, Antichrist,  
She never will forgive you. Fly my  
Lord, fly! [power to burn!

Cran. I wrote it, and God grant me

Mart. They have given me a safe  
conduct: for all that

I dare not stay, I fear, I fear, I see you,  
Dear friend, for the last time; fare-  
well, and fly.

Cran. Fly and farewell, and let me  
die the death. [Ex. Peter Martyr.

Enter Old Servant.

O. Serv. O, kind and gentle master,  
The Queen's Officers

Are here in force to take you to the  
Tower.

Cran. Ay, gentle friend, admit  
them. I will go.

I thank my God it is too late to fly.  
[Exeunt.

SCENE III.—St. Paul's Cross.

Father Bourne in the Pulpit. A crowd.  
Marchioness of Exeter, Courtenay,  
The Sieur de Noailles and his man  
Roger in front of the stage. Hubbub.

Noail. Hast thou let fall those pa-  
pers in the palace?

Rog. Ay, sir.

Noail. "There will be no peace for  
Mary till Elizabeth lose her head."

Rog. Ay, sir.

Noail. And the other. "Long live  
Elizabeth the Queen."

Rog. Ay, sir; she needs must tread  
upon them.

Noail. Well.  
These beastly swine make such a

grunting here, [saying.  
I cannot catch what father Bourne is

Rog. Quiet a moment, my masters;  
hear what the shaveling has to say  
for himself.

Crowd. Hush—hear.

Bourne. —and so this unhappy land,  
long divided in itself, and sever'd from  
the faith, will return into the one true  
fold, seeing that our gracious Virgin  
Queen hath—

Crowd. No pope! no pope!

Rog. (to those about him, mimicking  
Bourne). —hath sent for the holy  
legate of the holy father the Pope,  
Cardinal Pole, to give us all that holy  
absolution which—

1 Cit. Old Bourne to the life!

4 Cit. Holy absolution! holy In-  
quisition!

3 Cit. Down with the Papist.

[Hubbub.

Bourne. —and now that your good  
bishop, Bonner, who hath lain so long  
under bonds for the faith— [Hubbub.

Noail. Friend Roger, steal thou in  
among the crowd,

And get the swine to shout Elizabeth.  
Yon gray old Gospeller, sour as mid-  
winter,

Begin with him.

Rog. (goes.) By the mass, old friend,  
we'll have no pope here while the Lady  
Elizabeth lives.

Gospeller. Art thou of the true faith/  
fellow, that swearest by the mass?

Rog. Ay, that am I, new converted,  
but the old leaven sticks to my tongue  
yet.

1 Cit. He says right; by the mass  
we'll have no mass here.

Voices of the Crowd. Peace! hear  
him; let his own words damn the  
Papist. From thine own mouth I  
judge thee—tear him down.

Bourne. —and since our Gracious  
Queen, let me call her our second Vir-  
gin Mary, hath begun, to re-edify the  
true temple—

1 *Cit.* Virgin Mary! we'll have no virgins here—we'll have the Lady Elizabeth!

[*Swords are drawn, a knife is hurled, and sticks in the pulpit. The mob throng to the pulpit stairs.*]

*M. of Ex.* Son Courtenay, wilt thou see the holy father Murder'd before thy face? up, son, and save him!

They love thee, and thou canst not come to harm.

*Court. (in the pulpit).* Shame, shame, my masters! are you English-born, And set yourselves by hundreds against one?

*Crowd.* A Courtenay! a Courtenay!

[*A train of Spanish servants crosses at the back of the stage.*]

*Noail.* These birds of passage come before their time: [there.]

Stave off the crowd upon the Spaniard *Rog.* My masters, yonder's fatter game for you [you there—

Than this old gaping gurgyle: look The Prince of Spain coming to wed our Queen? [the city.]

After him, boys! and pelt him from [They seize stones and follow the Spaniards. Exeunt on the other side Marchioness of Exeter and Attendants.]

*Noail (to Roger).* Stand from me. If Elizabeth lose her Head—

That makes for France.

And if her people, anger'd thereupon, Arise against her and dethrone the Queen—

That makes for France.

And if I breed confusion anyway—

That makes for France.

Good day, my Lord of Devon; A bold heart yours to beard that raging mob!

*Court.* My mother said, Go up; and up I went. [wrong.]

I knew they would not do me any For I am mighty popular with them, Noailles.

*Noail.* You look'd a king.

*Court.* Why not? I am king's blood.

*Noail.* And in the world of change may come to be one.

*Court.* Ah!

*Noail.* But does your gracious Queen entreat you king-like?

*Court.* 'Fore God, I think she entreats me like a child.

*Noail.* You've but a dull life in this maiden court,

I fear, my Lord.

*Court.* A life of nods and yawns.

*Noail.* 'So you would honor my poor house to-night.

We might enliven you. Divers honest fellows,

The Duke of Suffolk lately freed from prison,

Sir Peter Carew and Sir Thomas Wyatt,

Sir Thomas Stafford, and some more—we play.

*Court.* At what?

*Noail.* The Game of Chess.

*Court.* The Game of Chess! I can play well, and I shall beat you there.

*Noail.* Ay, but we play with Henry, King of France, And certain of his court.

His Highness makes his moves across the channel, [are messengers] We answer him with ours, and there That go between us.

*Court.* Why, such a game, sir, were whole years a playing.

*Noail.* Nay; not so long I trust. That all depends [players.]

Upon the skill and swiftness of the *Court.* The King is skilful at it?

*Noail.* Very, my Lord.

*Court.* And the stakes high?

*Noail.* But not beyond your means.

*Court.* Well, I'm the first of players. I shall win. [company.]

*Noail.* With our advice and in our And so you well attend to the king's I think you may. [moves,]

*Court.* When do you meet?

*Noail.* To-night.

*Court. (aside).* I will be there; the fellow's at his tricks—

Deep—I shall fathom him. [*Aloud.*] Good morning, Noailles.

[*Exit Courtenay.*]

*Noail.* Good-day, my Lord. Strange game of chess! a King

That with her own pawns plays against a Queen, [King]

Whose play is all to find herself a Ay; but this fine blue-blooded Courtenay seems [Knight,]

Too princely for a pawn. Call him a That, with an ass's not a horse's head, Skips every way, from levity or from fear.

Well, we shall use him somehow, so that Gardiner [game]

And Simon Renard spy not out our Too early. Roger, thinkest thou that

any one Suspected thee to be my man?

*Rog.* Not one, sir.

*Noail.* No! the disguise was perfect. Let's away! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—London. A Room in the Palace. Elizabeth. Enter Courtenay.

*Court.* So yet am I, [me,] Unless my friends and mirrors lie to A goodlier-looking fellow than this Philip.

Pah! [traitor?]

The Queen is ill advised: shall I turn They've almost talk'd me into: yet the

word Affrights me somewhat; to be such a one,

As Harry Bolingbroke hath a lure in it

Good now, my Lady Queen, tho' by  
your age,  
And by your looks you are not worth  
the having,  
Yet by your crown you are.

[Seeing Elizabeth.  
The Princess there?

If I tried her and la—she's amorous.  
Have we not heard of her in Edward's  
time, [Lord Admiral?

Her freaks and frolics with the late  
I do believe she'd yield. I should be  
still [knows—

a party in the state; and then, who  
Eliz. What are you musing on, my  
Lord of Devon?

Court. Has not the Queen—  
Eliz. Done what, Sir?

Court. —Made you follow  
The Lady Suffolk and the Lady Len-  
You, [nox.

The heir presumptive. [it.  
Eliz. Why do you ask? you know  
Court. You needs must bear it hard-  
ly.

Eliz. No, indeed!  
I am utterly submissive to the Queen.

Court. Well, I was musing upon  
that; the Queen [be friends.

Is both my foe and yours; we should  
Eliz. My Lord, the hatred of another  
to us

Is no true bond of friendship.  
Court. Might it not

Be the rough preface of some closer  
bond?

Eliz. My Lord, you late were loosed  
from out the Tower,

Where, like a butterfly in a chrysalis,  
You spent your life; that broken, out  
you flutter [would settle

Thro' the new world, go zigzag, now  
Upon this flower, now that; but all  
things here [ed

At court are known; you have solicited  
The Queen, and been rejected.

Court. Flower, she!  
Half faded! but you, cousin, are fresh  
and sweet [tried.

As the first flower no bee has ever  
Eliz. Are you the bee to try me?  
why, but now

I called you butterfly.  
Court. You did me wrong,  
I love not to be called a butterfly:

Why do you call me butterfly?  
Eliz. Why do you go so gay then?

Court. Velvet and gold.  
This dress was made me as the Earl of  
Devon

To take my seat in: looks it not  
right royal?

Eliz. So royal that the Queen for-  
bade your wearing it.

Court. I wear it then to spite her.  
Eliz. My Lord, my Lord;

I see you in the Tower again. Her  
majesty

Hears you affect the Prince—prelates  
kneel to you,—

Court. I am the noblest blood in  
Europe, Madam.

A Courtenay of Devon, and her cousin.

Eliz. She hears you make your  
boasts that after all

She means to wed you. Folly, my good  
Lord. [the state

Court. How folly? a great party in  
Wills me to wed her.

Eliz. Failing her, my Lord,  
Doth not as great a party in the state  
Will you to wed me?

Court. Even so, fair lady.  
Eliz. You know to flatter ladies.

Court. Nay, I meant  
True matters of the heart.

Eliz. My heart, my Lord,  
Is no great party in the state as yet.

Court. Great, said you? nay, you  
shall be great. I love you,

Lay my life in your hands. Can you  
be close?

Eliz. Can you, my Lord?  
Court. Close as a miser's casket.

Listen: [bassador,  
The King of France, Noailles the Am-  
The Duke of Suffolk and Sir Peter

Carew. [others,  
Sir Thomas Wyatt, I myself, some  
Have sworn this Spanish marriage

shall not be. [lecture—  
If Mary will not hear us—well—con-  
Were I in Devon with my wedded

bride, [ear;  
The people there so worship me—Your  
You shall be Queen.

Eliz. You speak too low, my Lord;  
I cannot hear you.

Court. I'll repeat it.  
Eliz. No!

Stand farther off, or you may lose your  
head. [sweet sake.

Court. I have a head to lose for your  
Eliz. Have you, my Lord? Best

keep it for your own.  
Nay, pout not, cousin. [indeed

Not many friends are mine, except  
Among the many. I believe you mine;

[well,  
And: o you may continue mine, fare-  
And that at once.

Enter Mary behind.  
Mary. Whispering—leagued  
together

To bar me from my Philip.  
Court. Pray—consider—

Eliz. (seeing the Queen). Well,  
that's a noble horse of yours, my  
Lord. [day,

I trust that he will carry you well to-  
And heal your headache.

Court. You are wild; what  
headache?

Heartache, perchance; not headache.  
Eliz. (aside to Courtenay). Are  
you blind?

[Courtenay sees the Queen and exit.  
Exit Mary.

Enter Lord William Howard.

*How.* Was that my Lord of Devon?  
do not you [Devon.  
Be seen in corners with my Lord of  
He hath fallen out of favor with the  
Queen. [and him  
She fears the Lords may side with you  
Against her marriage; therefore is  
he dangerous, [come  
And if this Prince of fluff and feather  
To woo you, niece, he is dangerous  
every way.

*Eliz.* Not very dangerous that way,  
my good uncle. [danger here.

*How.* But your state is full of  
The disaffected, heretics, reformers,  
Look to you as the one to crown their  
ends. [you;  
Mix not yourself with any plot I pray  
Nay, if by chance you hear of any  
such,

Speak not thereof—no, not to your  
best friend, [it. Still—  
Lest you should be confounded with  
Perinde ac cadaver—as the priest says,  
[dead body.

You know your Latin—quiet as a  
What was my Lord of Devon telling  
you? [or not,

*Eliz.* Whether he told me any thing  
I follow your good counsel, gracious  
uncle.

Quiet as a dead body.

*How.* You do right well.  
I do not care to know; but this I  
charge you. [Chancellor  
Tell Courtenay nothing. The Lord  
(I count it as a kind of virtue in him,  
He hath not many), as a mastiff dog  
May love a puppy cur for no more  
reason [up together,

Than that the twain have been tied  
Thus Gardiner—for the two were fel-  
low-prisoners

So many years in yon accursed Tower—  
[to it, niece,

Hath taken to this Courtenay. Look  
He hath no fence when Gardiner ques-  
tions him; [know him  
All oozes out; yet him—because they  
The last White Rose, the last Planta-  
genet [people

(Nay, there is Cardinal Pole, too), the  
Claim as their natural leader—ay, some  
say, [King belike,

That you shall marry him, make him  
*Eliz.* Do they say so, good uncle?

*How.* Ay, good niece!  
You should be plain and open with me,  
niece.

You should not play upon me.

*Eliz.* No, good uncle.

*Enter Gard.* The Queen would see  
your Grace upon the moment.

*Eliz.* Why, my lord Bishop?

*Gard.* I think she means to counsel  
your withdrawing [house.

To Ashridge, or some other country  
*Eliz.* Why, my lord Bishop?

*Gard.* I do but bring the message,  
know no more.

Your Grace will hear her reasons from  
herself. [before the word

*Eliz.* 'Tis mine own wish fulfill'd  
Was spoken, for in truth I had meant  
to crave,

Permission of her Highness to retire  
To Ashridge, and pursue my studies  
there. [before the word

*Gard.* Madam, to have the wish  
Is man's good Fairy—and the Queen is  
yours.

I left her with rich jewels in her hand,  
Whereof 'tis like enough she means to  
make

A farewell present to your Grace.

*Eliz.* My Lord,  
I have the jewel of a loyal heart.

*Gard.* I doubt it not, Madam, most  
loyal. [Bows low and exit.

*How.* See,  
This comes of parleying with my Lord  
of Devon. [self

Well, well, you must obey; and I my-  
Believe it will be better for your wel-  
Your time will come. [fare.

*Eliz.* I think my time will come.  
Uncle,

I am of sovereign nature, that I know.  
Not to be quell'd; and I have felt  
within me. [God's just hour

Stirrings of some great doom when  
Peals—but this fierce old Gardiner—  
his big baldness,

That irritable forelock which he rubs,  
His buzzard beak and deep-incavern'd  
Half fright me. [eyes

*How.* You've a bold heart; keep it  
so. [turn traitor;  
He cannot touch you save that you  
And so take heed I pray you—you are  
one [you, niece,

Who love that men should smile upon  
They'd smile you into treason—some of  
them. [smiling sea.

*Eliz.* I spy the rock beneath the  
But if this Philip, the proud Catholic  
prince, [hates me, seek

And this bald priest, and she that  
In that lone house, to practise on my  
By poison, fire, shot, stab— [life,

*How.* They will not, niece.  
Mine is the fleet and all the power at  
sea—

Or will be in a moment. If they dared  
To harm you, I would blow this Philip  
and all [devil,

Your trouble to the dogstar and the  
*Eliz.* To the Pleiads, uncle; they  
have lost a sister.

*How.* But why say that? what have  
you done to lose her? [Queen.

Come, come, I will go with you to the  
[Exit.

SCENE V.—A Room in the Palace. Mary  
with Philip's miniature. Alice.

Mary (kissing the miniature). Most  
goodly, kinglike, and an emperor's  
son,—

A king to be,—is he not noble, girl?

*Alice.* Goodly enough, your Grace,  
and yet, methinks,  
I have seen goodlier.

*Mary.* Ay; some waxen doll  
Thy baby eyes have rested on, belike;  
All red and white, the fashion of our  
land. [her soul]  
But my good mother came [God rest  
Of Spain, and I am Spanish in myself,  
And in my likings.

*Alice.* By your Grace's leave  
Your royal mother came of Spain, but  
took [royal father  
To the English red and white. Your  
(For so they say) was all pure lily and  
In his youth, and like a lady. [rose

*Mary.* O, just God!  
Sweet mother, you had time and cause  
enough

To sicken of his lilies and his roses.  
Cast off, betray'd, defamed, divorced,  
forlorn! [forgiveness,  
And then the king—that traitor past  
The false archbishop fawning on him,  
married

The mother of Elizabeth—a heretic  
Ev'n as *she* is; but God hath sent me  
here

To take such order with all heretics  
That it shall be, before I die, as tho'  
My father and my brother had not  
lived. [Jane,

What wast thou saying of this Lady  
Now in the Tower?

*Alice.* Why, Madam, she was pass-  
ing [her.  
Some chapel down in Essex, and with  
Lady Anne Wharton, and the Lady  
Anne [stood up  
Bow'd to the Pyx; but Lady Jane  
Stiff as the very backbone of heresy.  
And wherefore bow ye not, says Lady  
Anne [and Earth?

To him within there who made Heaven  
I can not, and I dare not, tell you  
What Lady Jane replied. [Grace

*Mary.* But I will have it.

*Alice.* She said—pray pardon me,  
and pity her—

She hath harken'd evil counsel—ah!  
The baker made him. [she said,

*Mary.* Monstrous! blasphemous!  
She ought to burn. Hence, thou [exit  
*Alice.* No—being traitor [a child  
Her head will fall: shall it? she is but  
We do not kill the child for doing that  
His father whipt him into doing—a  
head [that mine

So full of grace and beauty! would  
Were half as gracious! O, My lord to  
be,

My love, for thy sake only.  
I am eleven years older than he is.  
But will he care for that?

No, by the holy Virgin, being noble,  
But love me only: then the bastard  
sprout,

My sister, is far fairer than myself.  
Will he be drawn to her?  
No, being of the true faith with myself.

Paget is for him—for to wed with  
Spain [against him;  
Would treble England—Gardiner is  
The Council, people, Parliament  
against him; [hated me;  
But I will have him! My hard father  
My brother rather hated me than  
loved; [Virgin,  
My sister cowers and hates me. Holy  
Plead with thy blessed Son; grant me  
my prayer; [lead  
Give me my Philip; and we two will  
The living waters of the Faith again  
Back thro' their widow'd channel  
here, and watch [of old,  
The parch'd banks rolling incense, as  
To heaven, and kindled with the palms  
of Christ!

*Enter Usher.*

Who waits, sir? [lor.

*Usher.* Madam, the Lord Chancel-  
*Mary.* Bid him come in [*Enter*  
Gardiner.) Good-morning, my  
good Lord. [*Exit Usher.*

*Gard.* That every morning of your  
Majesty

May be most good, is every morning's  
prayer [Gardiner.

Of your most loyal subject, Stephen  
*Mary.* Come you to tell me this,  
my Lord?

*Gard.* And more.  
Your people have begun to learn your  
worth. [debts,

Your pious wish to pay King Edward's  
Your lavish household curb'd, and  
the remission [people,  
Of half that subsidy levied on the  
Make all tongues praise and all hearts  
beat for you.

I'd have you yet more loved: the  
realm is poor, [withdraw  
The exchequer at neap-ebb: we might  
Part of our garrison at Calais.

*Mary.* Calais!  
Our one point on the main, the gate of  
France!

I am Queen of England; take mine  
eyes, mine heart.  
But do not lose me Calais.

*Gard.* Do not fear it.  
Of that hereafter. I say your Grace  
is loved. [your friend

That I may keep you thus, who am  
And ever faithful counsellor, might I  
speak?

*Mary.* I can forespeak your speak-  
ing. Would I marry

Prince Philip, if all England hate him?  
That is [another:

Your question, and I front it with  
Is it England, or a party? Now, your  
answer [my dress

*Gard.* My answer is, I wear beneath  
A shirt of mail: my house hath been  
assaulted, [lace,

And when I walk abroad, the popu-  
With fingers pointed like so many dag-  
gers, [Philip;

Stab me in fancy, hissing Spain and

And when I sleep, a hundred men-at-arms

Guard my poor dreams for England.

Men would murder me,  
Because they think me favorer of this marriage.

Mary. And that were hard upon you, my Lord Chancellor. [von—

Gard. But our young Earl of De—  
Mary. Earl of Devon?

I freed him from the tower, placed him at Court; [fool—

I made him Earl of Devon, and—the He wrecks his health and wealth on courtesans, [dog.

And rolls himself in carrion like a Card. More like a school-boy that hath broken bounds.

Sickenng himself with sweets.

Mary. I will not hear of him. Good, then, they will revolt; but I And shall control them. [am Tudor,

Gard. I will help you, Madam, Even to the utmost. All the church is grateful. [pulpited

You have ousted the mock priest, re—The shepherd of St. Peter, raised the rood again,

And brought us back the mass. I am all thanks [well,

To God and to your Grace: yet I know Your people, and I go with them so far, [here to play

Will brook nor Pope nor Spaniard The tyrant, or in commonwealth or church.

Mary (showing the picture). Is this the face of one who plays the tyrant? [gentle?

Peruse it; it is not goodly, ay, and

Gard. Madam, methinks a cold face and a haughty.

And when your Highness talks of Courtneyay— [life

Ay, true—a goodly one. I would his Were half as goodly (aside).

Mary. What is that you mutter?

Gard. Oh, Madam, take it bluntly; marry Philip,

And be stepmother of a score of sons! The prince is known in Spain, in Flanders, ha!

For Philip—

Mary. You offend us; you may leave us.

You see thro' warping glasses.

Gard. If your Majesty—

Mary. I have sworn upon the body and blood of Christ

I'll none but Philip.

Gard. Hath your Grace so sworn?

Mary. Ay, Simon Renard knows it.

Gard. News to me!

It then remains for your poor Gardiner, [what less

So you still care to trust him some—Than Simon Renard, to compose the event

In some such form as least may harm your Grace.

Mary. I'll have the scandal sound—ed to the mud.

I know it a scandal.

Gard. All my hope is now It may be found a scandal.

Mary. You offend us.

Gard. (aside). These princes are like children, must be physick'd, The bitter in the sweet. I have lost mine office, [fool.

It may be, thro' mine honesty, like a [fool. [Exit.

Enter Usher.

Mary. Who waits?

Usher. The Ambassador from France, your Grace.

Mary. Bid him come in. Good morning, Sir de Noailles.

[Exit Usher. Noail (entering). A happy morning to your majesty.

Mary. And I should some time have a happy morning;

I have had none yet. What says the King your master?

Noail. Madam, my master hears with much alarm, [Spain—

That you may marry Philip, Prince of Foreseeing, with whate'er unwilling—ness,

That if this Philip be the titular king Of England, and at war with him, your Grace [war,

And kingdom will be suck'd into the Ay, tho' you long for peace; where—fore, my master, [will,

If but to prove your Majesty's good Would fain have some fresh treaty drawn between you.

Mary. Why some fresh treaty? wherefore should I do it?

Sir, if we marry, we shall still main—tain

All former treaties with his Majesty. Our royal word for that! and your good master, [break them,

Pray God he do not be the first to Must be content with that; and so, farewell.

Noail. (going, returns). I would your answer had been other, Madam, For I foresee dark days.

Mary. And so do I, sir;

Your master works against me in the dark.

I do believe he help Northumberland Against me. [Grace.

Noail. Nay, pure fantasy, your Why should he move against you?

Mary. Will you hear why?

Mary of Scotland,—for I have not own'd

My sister, and I will not,—after me Is heir of England; and my royal father, [with ours,

To make the crown of Scotland one Had mark'd her for my brother Ed—ward's bride; [from Scotland

Ay, but your king stole her a babe

In order to betroth her to your Dauphin.

See then: [Dauphin,  
Mary of Scotland, married to your  
Would make our England, France;  
Mary of England, joining hands with  
Spain,

Would be too strong for France.

Yea, were there issue born to her,  
Spain and we,

One crown, might rule the world.

There lies your fear.

That is your drift. You play at hide  
and seek.

Show me your faces!

Noail. Madam, I am amazed:  
French, I must needs wish all good  
things for France [protest

That must be pardon'd me; but I  
Your Grace's policy hath a farther  
flight [seek

Than mine into the future. We but  
Some settled ground for peace to stand  
upon.

Mary. Well, we will leave all this,  
sir, to our council.

Have you seen Philip ever?

Noail. Only once.

Mary. Is this like Philip?

Noail. Ay, but nobler-looking.

Mary. Hath he the large ability of  
the Emperor?

Noail. No, surely [thee,

Mary. I can make allowance for  
Thou speakest of the enemy of thy  
king. [naked truth.

Noail. Make no allowance for the  
He is every way a lesser man than  
Charles; [ing in him.

Stone-hard, ice-cold—no dash of dar-  
Mary. If cold, his life is pure.

Noail. Why (smiling), no, indeed.

Mary. Sayst thou? [(smiling).

Noail. A very wanton life indeed

Mary. Your audience is concluded,  
sir. [Exit Noailles.

You cannot

Learn a man's nature from his natural  
foe.

Enter Usher.

Who waits?

Usher. The ambassador of Spain,  
your Grace. [Exit.

Enter Simon Renard.

Mary. Thou art ever welcome,  
Simon Renard. Hast thou  
Brought me the letter which thine  
Emperor promised

Long since, a formal offer of the hand  
Of Philip? [reach'd me.

Ren. Nay, your Grace, it hath not  
I know not wherefore—some mischance  
of flood,

And broken bridge, or spavin'd horse,  
or wave [have written.

And wind at their old battle; he must  
Mary. But Philip never writes me  
one poor word. [wealth.

Which in his absence had been all my

Strange in a wooer!

Ren. Yet I know the Prince,  
So your king-parliament suffer him to  
land, [shore.

Years to set foot upon your island  
Mary. God change the pebble which  
his kingly foot [stone

First presses into some more costly  
Than ever blinded eye. I'll have one  
mark it [firelike;

And bring it me. I'll have it burnish'd  
I'll set it round with gold, with pearl,  
with diamond.

Let the great angel of the church come  
with him;

Stand on the deck and spread his wings  
for sail!

God lay the waves and strew the storms  
at sea, [O Renard,

And here at land among the people.  
I am much beset, I am almost in des-  
pair [ours;

Paget is ours. Gardiner perchance is  
But for our heretic Parliament—

Ren. O Madam,  
You fly your thoughts like kites. My

Master, Charles, [here,  
Bade you go softly with your heretics  
Until your throne had ceased to trem-  
ble. Then [Besides,

Spit them like larks for aught I care.  
When Henry broke the carcass of your  
church [among you

To pieces, there were many wolves  
Who dragg'd the scatter'd limbs into  
their den. [render these;

The Pope would have you make them  
So would your cousin, Cardinal Pole;  
ill counsel! [not yet

These let them keep at present; stir  
This matter of the church lands. At  
his coming

Your star will rise.

Mary. My star! a baleful one.

I see but the black night, and hear the  
wolf.

What star?

Ren. Your star will be your  
princely son, [lands!

Heir of this England and the Nether-  
And if your wolf the while should howl  
for more. [gold.

We'll dust him from a bag of Spanish  
I do believe, I have dusted some al-  
ready, [ours.

That, soon or late, your parliament is  
Mary. Why do they talk so foully  
of your Prince,

Renard?

Ren. The lot of princes. To sit  
Is to be lied about. [high

Mary. They call him cold,  
Haughty, ay, worse.

Ren. Why, doubtless, Philip shows  
Some of the bearing of your blue blood  
—still

All within measure—nay, it well be-  
comes him.

Mary. Hath he the large ability of  
his father?

*Ren.* Nay, some believe that he will go beyond him.

*Mary.* Is this like him?

*Ren.* Ay, somewhat; but your Philip [the sun.

Is the most princelike Prince beneath This is a daub to Philip.

*Mary.* Of a pure life?

*Ren.* As an angel among angels.

Yea, by Heaven, ["Whosoever The text—Your Highness knows it, Looketh after a woman," would not graze [in him there.

The Prince of Spain. You are happy Chaste as your grace!

*Mary.* I am happy in him there.

*Ren.* And would be altogether happy, madam, [closer.

So that your sister were but look'd to You have sent her from the court, but then she goes,

I warrant, not to hear the nightingales, But hatch you some new treason in the woods.

*Mary.* We have our spies abroad to catch her tripping, And then if caught, to the Tower.

*Ren.* The Tower! the block. The word has turn'd your Highness pale; the thing [er's time.

Was no such scarecrow in your father I have heard, the tongue yet quiver'd with the jest

When the head leapt—so common! I do think

To save your crown that it must come to this. [people love her,

*Mary.* I love her not, but all the And would not have her even to the Tower.

*Ren.* Not yet; but your old Traitors of the Tower—

Why, when you put Northumberland to death, [them all,

The sentence having passed upon Spared you the Duke of Suffolk, Guilford Dudley,

Ev'n that young girl who dared to wear your crown?

*Mary.* Dared, no, not that; the child obey'd her father

Spite of her tears her father forced it on her.

*Ren.* Good Madam, when the Roman wish'd to reign,

He slew not him alone who wore the purple,

But his assessor in the throne, perchance

A child more innocent than Lady Jane. [Roman Emperor.

*Mary.* I am English Queen, not *Ren.* Yet too much mercy is a want of mercy, [fire, or this

And wastes more life. Stamp out the Will smoulder and re-flame, and burn the throne [will not come

Where you should sit with Philip: he Till she be gone.

*Mary.* Indeed, if that were true—

But I must say farewell. I am some what faint [not Queen

With our long talk. Tho' Queen, I am Of mine own heart, which every now and then golden chain—

Beats me half dead: yet stay, this My father on a birthday gave it me,

And I have broken with my father—take

And wear it as memorial of a morning Which found me full of foolish doubts, and leaves me

As hopeful. [all follies

*Ren. (aside.)* Whew—the folly of Is to be love-sick for a shadow.

[Aloud] Madam, [with gold, This chains me to your service, not But dearest links of love. Farewell,

and trust me, Philip is yours. [Exit.

*Mary.* Mine—but not yet all mine—

*Enter Usher.*

*Usher.* Your Council is in Session, please your Majesty.

*Mary.* Sir, let them sit. I must have time to breathe.

No, say I come. [Exit Usher.] I won by boldness once.

The Emperor counsell'd me to fly to Flanders. [rode,

I would not; but a hundred miles I Sent out my letters, call'd my friends together,

Struck home and won.

And when the Council would not crown me—thought [keep,

To bind me first by oaths I could not And keep with Christ and conscience was it boldness.

Or weakness that won there? when I their Queen, [fore them,

Cast myself down upon my knees be—And those hard men brake into woman tears, [that passion

Ev'n Gardiner, all amazed, and in Gave me my Crown.

*Enter Alice.*

Girl; hast thou ever heard Slanders against Prince Philip in our Court? [Grace; no, never.

*Alice.* What slanders? I, your *Mary.* Nothing?

*Alice.* Never, your Grace.

*Mary.* See that you neither hear them nor repeat!

*Alice (aside.)* Good Lord! but I have heard a thousand such.

Ay, and repeated them as often—mum! [again?

Why comes that old fox-Fleming back

*Enter Renard.*

*Ren.* Madam, I scarce had left your Grace's presence

Before I chanced upon the messenger Who brings that letter which we waited for— [hand.

The formal offer of Prince Philip's

It craves an instant answer, Ay or No? [Council sits.

Mary. An instant, Ay or No! the Give it me quick.

Alice (stepping before her). Your Highness is all trembling.

Mary. Make way.

[Exit into the Council Chamber.

Alice. O, Master Renard, Master Renard.

[Prince; If you have falsely painted your fine Praised, where you should have blamed him, I pray God

No woman ever loved you, Master Renard.

[at night It breaks my heart to hear her moan As tho' the nightmare never left her bed.

[you ever Ren. My pretty maiden, tell me, did Sigh for a beard?

Alice. That's not a pretty question.

Ren. Not prettily put? I mean, my pretty maiden,

A pretty man for such a pretty maiden.

Alice. My Lord of Devon is a pretty man.

[then? I hate him. Well, but if I have, what

Ren. Then, pretty maiden, you should know that whether.

A wind be warm or cold, it serves to A kindled fire.

[fan Alice. According to the song. His friends would praise him, I believed 'em.

His foes would blame him, and I scorned 'em,

His friends—as Angels I received 'em, His foes—The Devil had suborn'd 'em.

Ren. Peace, pretty maiden. I hear them stirring in the Council Chamber.

[and yet, Lord Paget's "Ay" is sure—who else? They are all too much at odds to close at once

[ness comes. In one full throated No! Her High-

Enter Mary.

Alice. How deathly pale!—a chair, your Highness.

[Bringing one to the Queen. Ren. Madam,

The Council? Mary. Ay! My Philip is all mine.

[Sinks into chair, half fainting.

## ACT II.

### SCENE I.—Allington Castle.

Sir Thomas Wyatt. I do not hear from Carew or the Duke [move.

Of Suffolk, and till then I should not The Duke hath gone to Leicester;

Carew stirs In Devon: that fine porcelain Courtenay,

[in using, Save that he fears he might be crack'd (I have known a semi-madman in my time

[too. So fancy ridd'n) should be in Devon

Enter William.

News abroad, William?

Will. None so new, Sir Thomas, and none so old, Sir Thomas. No new news that Philip comes to wed Mary, no old news that all men hate it. Old Sir Thomas would have hated it. The bells are ringing at Maidstone. Doesn't your worship hear?

Wyatt. Ay, for the Saints are come to reign again.

[no call Most like it is a Saint's-day. There's As yet for me; so in this pause, before

The mine be fired, it were a pious work To string my father's sonnets, left about

[order, Like loosely-scatter'd jewels, in fair And head them with a lamer rhyme of mine,

To grace his memory.

Will. Ay, why not, Sir Thomas? He was a fine courtier, he; Queen Anne loved him. All the women loved him. I loved him, I was in Spain with him, I couldn't eat in Spain, I couldn't sleep in Spain. I hate Spain, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. But thou couldst drink in Spain if I remember.

Will. Sir Thomas, we may grant the wine. Old Sir Thomas always granted the wine.

Wyatt. Hand me the casket with my father's sonnets.

Will. Ay—sonnets—a fine courtier of the old Court, old Sir Thomas.

[Exit. Wyatt. Courtier of many courts, he loved the more

His own gray towers, plain life and letter'd peace,

To read and rhyme in solitary fields, The lark above, the nightingale below,

And answer them in song. The Sire begets

Not half his likeness in his son. I fail Where he was fullest: yet—to write it down.

[He writes. Re-enter William.

Will. There is news, there is news, and no call for sonnet-sorting now, nor for sonnet-making either, but ten thousand men on Penenden Heath all calling after your worship, and your worship's name heard into Maidstone market, and your worship the first man in Kent and Christendom, for the world's up, and your worship a-top of it.

Wyatt. Inverted Æsop—mountain out of mouse.

[house knaves, Say for ten thousand ten—and pot Brain-dizzied with a draught of morn'ing ale.

Enter Antony Knyvett.

Will. Here's Antony Knyvett.

Kny. Look you, Master Wyatt

Tear up that woman's work there.

Wyatt. No; not these,  
Dumb children of my father, that will  
speak

When I and thou and all rebellious lie  
Dead bodies without voice. Song flies  
For ages. [you know

Kny. Tut, your sonnet's a flying  
Wing'd for a moment. [ant,

Wyatt. Well, for mine own work  
[tearing the paper],

It lies there in six pieces at your feet;  
For all that I can carry it in my head.

Kny. If you can carry your head  
upon your shoulders.

Wyatt. I fear you come to carry it  
off my shoulders,

And sonnet-making's safer.

Kny. Why, good Lord,  
Write you as many sonnets as you  
will. [ears, brains?

Ay, but not now; what, have you eyes,  
This Philip and the black-faced  
swarms of Spain, [world,

The hardest, cruellest people in the  
Come locusting upon us, eat us up,

Confiscate lands, goods, money—  
Wyatt, Wyatt, [come

Wake, or the stout old island will be—  
A rotten limb of Spain. They roar  
for you [them—more—

On Penenden Heath, a thousand of  
All arm'd waiting a leader; there's  
no glory

Like his who saves his country; and  
you sit [judge,

Sing-singing here; but, if I'm any  
By God, you are as poor a poet, Wyatt,  
As a good soldier.

Wyatt. You as poor a critic  
As an honest friend: you stroke me  
on one cheek, [Anthony!

Buffet the other. Come, you bluster,  
You know I know all this I must not  
move

Until I hear from Carew and the Duke.  
I fear the mine is fired before the time.

Kny. [showing a paper]. But here's  
some Hebrew. Faith, I half forgot  
it. [strange youth

Look; can you make it English? A  
Suddenly thrust it on me, whisper'd,  
"Wyatt," [his back

And whisking round a corner, show'd  
Before I read his face.

Wyatt. Ha! Courtenay's cipher,  
[Reads.

"Sir Peter Carew fled to France: It  
is thought the Duke will be taken. I  
am with you still; but, for appearance'  
sake, stay with the Queen. Gardiner  
knaves, but the Council are all at odds,  
and the Queen hath no force for resist-  
ance. Move, if you move, at once."

[taken?  
Is Peter Carew fled? Is the Duke  
Down scabbard, and out sword! and  
let Rebellion

Roar till throne rock, and crown fall.  
No; not that; [reign.

But we will teach Queen Mary how to

Who are those that shout below there.

Kny. Why, some fifty  
That follow'd me from Penenden  
Heath in hope

To hear you speak. [Knyvett;  
Wyatt. Open the window,  
The mine is fired, and I will speak to  
them.

Men of Kent; England of England:

you that have kept your old customs  
upright, while all the rest of England  
bow'd theirs to the Norman, the cause

that hath brought us together is not  
the cause of a county or ashire, but of  
this England, in whose crown our Kent

is the fairest jewel. Philip shall not  
wed Mary; and ye have called me to  
be your leader. I know Spain. I have

been there with my father; I have seen  
them in their own land; have marked  
the haughtiness of their nobles; the

cruelty of their priests. If this man  
marry our Queen, however the Council  
and the Commons may fence round his

power with restriction, he will be King,  
King of England, my masters; and the  
Queen, and the laws, and the people, his

slaves. What? shall we have Spain on  
the throne and in the parliament; Spain  
in the pulpit and on the law-bench;

Spain in all the great officers of state;  
Spain in our ships, in our forts, in our  
houses, in our beds?

Crowd. No! no! no Spain.

Will. No Spain in our beds—that  
were worse than all. I have been  
there with old Sir Thomas, and the  
beds I know. I hate Spain.

A Peasant. But, Sir Thomas, must  
we levy war against the Queen's  
Grace?

Wyatt. No, my friend; war for the  
Queen's Grace—to save her from her-  
self and Philip—war against Spain.

And think not we shall be alone—  
thousands will flock to us. The Coun-  
cil, the Court itself, is on our side.

The Lord Chancellor himself is on our  
side. The King of France is with us;  
the King of Denmark is with us; the  
world is with us—war against Spain!

And if we move not now, yet it will be  
known that we have moved; and if  
Philip come to be King, O, my God!

the rope, the rack, the thumbscrew,  
the stake, the fire. If we move not  
now, Spain moves, bribes our nobles

with her gold, and creeps, creeps snake-  
like about our legs till we cannot move  
at all; and ye know, my masters,

that wherever Spain hath ruled she  
hath wither'd all beneath her. Look  
at the New World—a paradise made

hell; the red man, that good helpless  
creature, starved, maim'd, flogg'd,  
flay'd, burn'd, boil'd, buried alive,

worried by dogs; and here, nearer  
home, the Netherlands, Sicily, Naples,  
Lombardy. I say no more—only this,  
their lot is yours. Forward to London

with me! forward to London! If ye love your liberties or your skins, forward to London! [Wyatt! A Wyatt!

*Crowd.* Forward to London! A Wyatt. But first to Rochester, to take the guns [river. From out the vessels lying in the Then on.

*A Peasant.* Ay, but I fear we be too few, Sir Thomas.

*Wyatt.* Not many yet. The world as yet, my friend, [tower Is not half-waked; but every parish Shall clang and clash alarm as we pass, [and fed And pour along the land, and swoll'n With indraughts and side-currents, in full force

Roll upon London. \* [Forward!

*Crowd.* A Wyatt! a Wyatt!

*Kny.* Wyatt, shall we proclaim Elizabeth?

*Wyatt.* I'll think upon it, Knyvett. *Kny.* Or Lady Jane?

*Wyatt.* No, poor soul; no.

Ay, gray old castle of Allington, green field [chance Beside the brimming Medway, it may That I shall never look upon you more.

*Kny.* Come, now, you're sonneting again.

*Wyatt.* Not I.

I'll have my head set higher in the state; [stake.

Or—if the Lord God will it—on the [E front.

SCENE II.—Guildhall. Sir Thomas White (*the Lord Mayor*), Lord William Howard, Sir Ralph Bagenhall, Aldermen and Citizens.

*White.* I trust the Queen comes hither with her guards.

*How.* Ay, all in arms.

[Several of the citizens move hastily out of the hall.

Why do they hurry out there?

*White.* My Lord, cut out the rotten from your apple, [go.

Your apple eats the better. Let them They go like those old Pharisees in John [cowards, Convicted by their conscience, arrant Or tamperers with that treason out of Kent.

When will her Grace be here?

*How.* In some few minutes. She will address your guilds and companies. [her.

I have striven in vain to raise a man for But help her in this exigency, make Your city loyal, and be the mightiest man

This day in England.

*White.* I am Thomas White.

Few things have fail'd to which I set my will.

I do my most and best.

*How.* You know that after

The Captain Brett, who went with your train bands [him

To fight with Wyatt, had gone over to With all his men, the Queen in that distress [traitor.

Sent Cornwallis and Hastings to the Feigning to treat with him about her marriage—

Know too what Wyatt said.

*White.* He'd sooner be, While this same marriage question was being argued,

Trusted than trust—the scoundrel—and demanded [Tower.

Possession of her person and the *How.* And four of her poor Council too, my Lord,

As hostages.

*White.* I know it. What do and say Your Council at this hour?

*How.* I will trust you.

We flog ourselves on you, my Lord.

The Council, [waters; The Parliament as well, are troubled And yet like waters of the fen they know not [address,

Which way to flow. All hangs on her And upon you, Lord Mayor.

*White.* How look'd the city When now you past it? Quiet?

*How.* Like our Council, Your city is divided. As we past,

Some hail'd, some hiss'd us. There were citizens [and look'd

Stood each before his shut-up booth, As grim and grave as from a funeral.

And here a knot of ruffians all in rags, With execrating execrable eyes,

Glared at the citizen. Here was a young mother, [blown back,

Her face on flame, her red hair all She shrilling "Wyatt," while the boy she held [red as she

Mimick'd and piped her "Wyatt," as In hair and cheek; and almost elbowing her, [death

So close they stood, another, mute as And white as her own milk; her babe in arms [heart

Had felt the faltering of his mother's And look'd as bloodless. Here a pious Catholic, [prayers

Mumbling and mixing up in his scared Heaven and earth's Maries; over his bow'd shoulder [hating beast,

Scowl'd that world-hated and world-A haggard Anabaptist. Many such groups. [Courtenay.

The names of Wyatt, Elizabeth, Nay the Queen's right to reign—'fore God, the rogues— [I say

Were freely buzz'd among them. So Your city is divided, and I fear

One scruple, this or that way, of success [now the Queen

Would turn it thither. Wherefore In this low pulse and palsy of the state,

Bade me to tell you that she counts on you

And on myself as her two hands; on  
you, [Lord,  
In your own city, as her right, my  
For you are loyal.

*White.* Am I Thomas White?  
One word before she comes. Eliza-  
beth— [these traitors.  
Her name is much abused among  
Where is she? She is loved by all of  
us. [matter.  
I scarce have heart to mingle in this  
If she should be mishandled?

*How.* No; she shall not.  
The Queen had written her word to  
come to court: [letter,  
Methought I smelt out Renard in the  
And fearing for her, sent a secret  
missive [or not  
Which told her to be sick. Happily  
It found her sick indeed.

*White.* God send her well;  
Here comes her Royal Grace.

*Enter Guards, Mary and Gardiner.*  
Sir Thomas White leads her to a  
raised seat on the dais.

*White.* I, the Lord Mayor, and these  
our companies

And guilds of London, gathered here,  
beseech [thanks  
Your highness to accept our lowliest  
For your most princely presence; and  
we pray

That we, your true and loyal citizens,  
From your own royal lips, at once may  
know [learn

The wherefore of this coming, and so  
Your royal will, and do it—I, Lord  
Mayor [panies.

Of London, and our Guilds and Com-  
*Mary.* In mine own person am I  
come to you, [know.

To tell you what indeed ye see and  
How traitorously these rebels out of  
Kent [selves and you.

Have made strong head against our-  
They would not have me wed the  
Prince of Spain; [at first—

That was their pretext—so they spake  
But we sent divers of our Council to  
them, [ask'd,

And by their answer to the question  
It doth appear this marriage is the  
least

Of all their quarrel. [their hearts:  
They have betrayed the treason of  
Seek to possess our person, hold our  
Tower, [and use

Place and displace our councillors,  
Both us and them according as they  
will. [your Queen;

Now what am I ye know right well—  
To whom, when I was wedded to the  
realm [ring whereof,

And the realm's laws (the spousal  
Not ever to be laid aside, I wear  
Upon this finger), ye did promise  
full

Allegiance and obedience to the death.  
Ye know my father was the rightful  
heir

Of England, and his right came down  
to me,  
Corroborate by your acts of Parlia-  
ment:

And as ye were most loving unto him,  
So doubtless will ye show yourselves  
to me. [one

Wherefore, ye will not brook that any  
Should seize our person, occupy our  
state, [sumptuous

More especially a traitor so pre-  
As this same Wyatt, who hath tam-  
per'd with

A public ignorance, and, under color  
Of such a cause as hath no color,  
seeks [yield

To bend the laws to his own will, and  
Full scope to persons rascal and for-  
lorn, [goods.

To make free spoil and havoc of your  
Now as your Prince, I say,  
I, that was never mother, cannot tell

How mothers love their children; yet  
methinks,

A prince as naturally may love his peo-  
ple [your Queen

As these their children; and be sure  
So loves you, and so loving, needs  
must deem

This love by you return'd as heartily:  
And thro' this common knot and bond  
of love, [thrown.

Doubt not they will be speedily over-  
As to this marriage, ye shall under-  
stand [selves,

We made thereto no treaty of our-  
And set no foot theretoward unad-  
vised [more,

Of all our Privy council; further-  
This marriage had the assent of those  
to whom [trust;

The king, my father, did commit his  
Who not alone esteem'd it honorable,  
But for the wealth and glory of our  
realm, [pedient.

And all our loving subjects, most ex-  
As to myself, [choose

I am not so set on wedlock as to  
But where I list, nor yet so amorous  
That I must needs be husbanded; I  
thank God, [doubt

I have lived a virgin, and I noway  
But that with God's grace, I can live  
so still. [should leave

Yet if it might please God that I  
Some fruit of mine own body after me,  
To be your king, ye would rejoice  
thereat, [trust;

And it would be your comfort, as I  
And truly, if I either thought or knew  
This marriage should bring loss or  
danger to you,

My subjects, or impair in any way  
This royal state of England, I would  
never [live;

Consent thereto, nor marry while I  
Moreover, if this marriage should not  
seem,

Before our own high Court of Parlia-  
ment.

To be of rich advantage to our realm  
We will refrain, and not alone from  
this,

Likewise from any other, out of which  
Looms the least chance of peril to our  
realm.

Wherefore be bold, and with your  
lawful Prince [yours,  
Stand fast against our enemies and  
And fear them not. I fear them not.  
My Lord.

I leave Lord William Howard in your  
city,

To guard and keep you whole and safe  
from all [these rebels,

The spoil and sackage aim'd at by  
Who mouth and foam against the  
Prince of Spain.

Voices. Long live Queen Mary :  
Down with Wyatt !

The Queen !

White. Three voices from our guilds  
and companies.

You are shy and proud like English-  
men, my masters,

And will not trust your voices. Un-  
derstand :

Your lawful Prince hath come to cast  
herself [fall

On loyal hearts and bosoms, hoped to  
Into the wide-spread arms of fealty,

And finds you statues. Speak at once  
For whom ? [—and all !

Our sovereign Lady by King Harry's  
will ; [ish Squire ?

The Queen of England—or the Kent-  
I know you loyal. Speak ! in the

name of God ! [of Kent ?

The Queen of England or the rabble  
The recking dungfork master of the

mace ! [and spade—

Your havings wasted by the scythe  
Your rights and charters hobnail'd

into slush— [bling blood—

Your houses fired—your gutters bub-  
Acclamation. No ! No ! The Queen !

the Queen !

White. Your Highness hears  
This burst and ba s of loyal harmony,

And how we each and all of us abhor  
The venomous, bestial, devilish revolt

Of Thomas Wyatt. Hear us now  
make oath

To raise your Highness thirty thou-  
sand men, [and brush

And arm and strike as with one hand,  
This Wyatt from our shoulders, like

a flea [wares.

That might have leapt upon us una-  
swear with me, noble fellow-citizens,

all, [companies.

With all your trades, and guilds, and  
Citizens. We swear !

Mary. We thank your Lordship  
and your loyal city.

[Exit Mary attended.

White. I trust this day, thro' God,  
I have saved the crown.

1 Ald. Ay, so my Lord of Pembroke  
in command

Of all her force be safe ; but there are  
doubts.

2 Ald. I hear that Gardiner, coming  
with the Queen,

And meeting Pembroke, bent to his  
saddle-bow, [him.

As if to win the man by flattering  
Is he so safe to fight upon her side ?

1 Ald. If not, there's no man safe.  
White. Yes, Thomas White.

I am safe enough : no man need flatter  
me. [you mark our Queen ?

2 Ald. Nay, no man need ; but did  
The color freely play'd into her face,

And the half sight which makes her  
look so stern, [of hers,

Seem'd thro' that dim dilated world  
To read our faces ; I have never seen

So queenly or so goodly. [her  
White. Courage, sir,

That makes or man or woman look  
their goodliest. [whine

Die like the torn fox-dumb, but never  
Like that poor heart, Northumberland,

at the block.

Bag. The man had children, and he  
whined for those.

Methinks most men are but poor-  
hearted, else [it commoner ?

Should we so doat on courage, were  
The Queen stands up, and speaks for

her own self ; [is goodly.

And all men cry, she is queenly, she  
Yet she's no goodlier ; tho' my Lord

Mayor here, [to-day,

By his own rule, he had been so bold  
Should look more goodly than the rest

of us.

White. Goodly ? I feel most goodly  
heart and hand, [all Kent.

And strong to throw ten Wyatts and  
Ha ! ha ! sir ; but you jest ; I love it : a

jest [even.

In time of danger shows the pulses  
Be merry ! yet, Sir Ralph, you look but

sad. [self,

I dare avouch you'd stand up for your-  
Tho' all the world should bay like winter

wolves.

Bag. Who knows ? the man is proven  
by the hour.

White. The man should make the  
hour, not this the man ;

And Thomas White will prove this  
Thomas Wyatt, [Cade,

And he will prove an Iden to this  
And he will play the Walworth to this

Wat ;

Come, sirs, we prate ; hence all—gather  
your men—

Myself must bustle. Wyatt comes to  
Southwark ; [the Thames

I'll have the drawbridge hewn into  
And see the citizen arm'd. Good day ;

good day. [Exit White.

Bag. One of much outdoor bluster.  
How. For all that,

Most honest, brave, and skilful ; and  
his wealth

A fountain of perennial alms—his fault

So thoroughly to believe in his own self.

*Bag.* Yet thoroughly to believe in So one's own self be thorough, were to Great things, my lord.

*How.* It may be.

*Bag.* I have heard One of your council flee and jeer at him.

*How.* The nursery-cocker'd child That may seem strange beyond his nursery.

The statesman that shall jeer and Makes enemies for himself and for his king;

And if he jeer not seeing the true man Behind his folly, he is thrice the fool; And if he see the man and still will jeer,

He is child and fool, and traitor to the Who is he? Let me shun him.

*Bag.* Nay, my Lord, He is damn'd enough already.

*How.* I must set The guard at Ludgate. Fare you well, Sir Ralph.

*Bag.* "Who knows?" I am for England. But who knows. That knows the Queen, the Spaniard, and the Pope,

Whether I be for Wyatt, or the Queen? *[Exeunt.]*

### SCENE III.—London Bridge.

*Enter Sir Thomas Wyatt and Brett.*

*Wyatt.* Brett, when the Duke of Norfolk moved against us, Thou criest "a Wyatt," and flying to our side

Left his all bare, for which I love thee, Brett.

Have for thine asking aught that I For thro' thine help we are come to London Bridge;

But how to cross it balks me. I fear Brett. Nay, hardly, save by boat, swimming, or wings.

*Wyatt.* Last night I climb'd into the gate-house, Brett,

And scared the gray old porter and his wife.

And then I crept along the gloom and They had hewn the drawbridge down into the river.

It roll'd as black as death; and that Which, coming with our coming, seem'd to smile

And sparkle like our fortune as thou Ran sunless down, and moan'd against the piers.

But o'er the chasm I saw Lord William Howard

By torchlight, and his guard; four guns gaped at me,

Black, silent mouths: had Howard spied me there

And made them speak, as well he might have done,

Their voice had left me none to tell What shall we do?

*Brett.* On somehow. To go back Were to lose all.

*Wyatt.* On over London Bridge We cannot: stay we cannot; there is ordnance

On the White Tower and on the Devil's And pointed full at Southwark; we By Kingston Bridge.

*Brett.* Ten miles about.

*Wyatt.* Ev'n so. But I have noticed from our partisans Within the city that they will stand by us,

If Ludgate can be reach'd by dawn

*Enter one of Wyatt's men.*

*Man.* Sir Thomas, I've found this paper, pray your worship read it; I know not my letters; the old priest taught me nothing.

*Wyatt (reads).* Whosoever will apprehend the traitor Thomas Wyatt shall have a hundred pounds for reward.

*Man.* Is that it? 'That's a big lot of money.

*Wyatt.* Ay, ay, my friend; not read it? 'tis not written

Half plain enough. Give me a piece of paper!

*[Writes "Thomas Wyatt" large.]* There, any man can read that.

*Brett.* But that's foolhardy.

*Wyatt.* No! boldness, which will give my followers boldness.

*Enter Man with a prisoner.*

*Man.* We found him, your worship, a plundering o' Bishop Winchester's house; he says he's a poor gentleman.

*Wyatt.* Gentleman, a thief! Go hang him. Shall we make

Those that we come to serve our sharpest foes?

*Brett.* Sir Thomas—

*Wyatt.* Hang him, I say.

*Brett.* Wyatt, but now you promised me a boon.

*Wyatt.* Ay, and I warrant this fine

*Brett.* Ev'n so; he was my neighbor once in Kent.

He's poor enough, has drunk and All that he had, and gentleman he was.

We have been glad together; let him *[live.]*

*Wyatt.* He has gambled for his life, and lost, he hangs.

No, no, my word's my word. Take thy poor gentleman!

Gamble thyself at once out of my sight, Or I will dig thee with my dagger.

Women and children! *[Away!]*

*Enter a crowd of Women and Children.*

1 Woman. O Sir Thomas, Sir Thomas, pray you go away, Sir Thomas, or you'll make the White Tower a black 'un for us this blessed day. He'll be

the death on us ; and you'll set the Devil's Tower a-spitting, and he'll smash all our bits o' things worse than Philip o' Spain.

2 *Woman*. Don't ye now go to think that we be for Philip o' Spain.

3 *Woman*. No, we know that ye be come to kill the Queen, and we'll pray for you all on our bended knees. But o' God's mercy don't ye kill the Queen here, Sir Thomas ; look ye, here's little Dickon, and little Robin and little Jenny—though she's but a side-cousin—and all on our knees, we pray you to kill the Queen farther off, Sir Thomas.

*Wyatt*. My friends, I have not come to kill the Queen [all,]  
Or here or there : I come to save you  
And I'll go farther off.

*Crowd*. Thanks, Sir Thomas, we be beholden to you, and we'll pray for you on our bended knees till our lives' end.

*Wyatt*. Be happy, I am your friend.  
To Kingston ; forward. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.—Room in the Gatehouse of Westminster Palace. Mary, Alice, Gardiner, Renard, Ladies.

*Alice*. O madam, if Lord Pembroke should be false ?

*Mary*. No, girl : most brave and loyal, brave and loyal.

His breaking with Northumberland broke Northumberland. [guards.]  
At the park gate he hovers with our  
These Kentish ploughmen cannot  
break the guards.

*Enter Messenger*.

*Mes*. Wyatt, your Grace, hath broken thro' the guards  
And gone to Ludgate.

*Gard*. Madame, I much fear  
That all is lost ; but we can save your  
Grace.

The river still is free. I do beseech  
you, [to Windsor.]

There yet is time, take boat and pass  
*Mary*. I pass to Windsor and I lose  
my crown.

*Gard*. Pass, then, I pray your  
Highness, to the Tower.

*Mary*. I shall but be their prisoner  
in the Tower. [Pembroke!]

*Cries without*. The traitor ! treason !  
*Ladies*. Treason ! Treason !

*Mary*. Peace. [to me ?]  
False to Northumberland, is he false  
Bear witness, Renard, that I live and  
die [A sound]

The true and faithful bride of Philip—  
Of feet and voices thickening hither—  
blows— [gates,  
Hark, there is battle at the palace  
And I will out upon the gallery.]

*Ladies*. No, no, your Grace ; see  
there the arrows flying.

*Mary*. I am Harry's daughter, Tudor, and not fear,

[Goes out on the gallery.]

The guards are all driven in, skulk  
into corners [guard  
Like rabbits to their holes. A gracious  
Truly ; shame on them, they have shut  
the gates !

*Enter Sir Robert Southwell*.

*South*. The porter, please your  
Grace, hath shut the gates  
On friend and foe. Your gentlemen-  
at-arms,

If this be not your Grace's order, cry  
To have the gates set wide again, and  
they [you right  
With their good battle-axes will do  
Against all traitors.]

*Mary*. They are the flower of Eng-  
land ; set the gates wide.

[Exit Southwell.]

*Enter Courtenay*.

*Court*. All lost, all lost, all yielded ;  
a barge, a barge,  
The Queen must to the Tower.

*Mary*. Whence come you, sir ?

*Court*. From Charing Cross ; the  
rebels broke us there, [might  
And I sped hither with what haste I  
To save my royal cousin.]

*Mary*. Where is Pembroke ?

*Court*. I left him somewhere in the  
thick of it. [that wouldst be King,

*Mary*. Left him and fled ; and thou  
And hast no heart nor honor. I myself  
Will down into the battle and there  
bide [those]

The upshot of my quarrel, or die with  
That are no cowards and no Courtenays  
[should call me coward.]

*Court*. I do not love your Grace

*Enter another Messenger*.

*Mes*. Over, your Grace, all crush'd ;  
The brave Lord William

Thrust him from Ludgate, and the  
traitor flying [Berkeley]

To Temple Bar there by Sir Maurice  
Was taken prisoner.

*Mary*. To the Tower with him !

*Mes*. 'Tis said he told Sir Maurice  
there was one [unto,  
Cognizant of this, and party there-  
My Lord of Devon.]

*Mary*. To the Tower with him !

*Court*. O la, the Tower, the Tower  
always the Tower, [the Tower.]

I shall grow into it—I shall be  
*Mary*. Your Lordship may not  
have so long to wait.

Remove him !

*Court*. La, to whistle out my life,  
And carve my coat upon the walls  
again ! [Exit Courtenay guarded.]

*Mes*. Also this Wyatt did confes  
the Princess [unto.

Cognizant thereof, and party there-  
*Mary*. What ? whom—whom did  
you say ?

Mes.  
Your Royal sister.  
Mary. To the Tower with her!  
My foes are at my feet and I am Queen.

[Gardiner and her Ladies kneel to her.  
Gard. (rising.) There let them lie,  
your footstool! (Aside.)

Can I strike [life  
Elizabeth?—not now and save the  
Of Devon: if I save him, he and his  
Are bound to me—may strike here-  
after. (Aloud.) Madam,

What Wyatt said, or what they said  
he said,

Cries of the moment and the street—  
Mary. He said it.

Gard. Your courts of justice will  
determine that.

Ren. (advancing.) I trust by this  
your Highness will allow

Some spice of wisdom in my telling  
you, [not come

When last we talk'd, that Philip would  
Till Guildford Dudley and the Duke  
of Suffolk

And Lady Jane had left us.

Mary. They shall die.  
Ren. And your so loving sister?

Mary. She shall die.  
My foes are at my feet, and Philip  
King. [Exeunt.

### ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Conduit in Grace  
Church. Painted with the Nine  
Worthies among them King Henry  
VIII., holding a book, on it inscribed  
"Verbum Dei."*

Enter Sir Ralph Bagenhall and Sir  
Thomas Stafford.

Bag. A hundred here and hundreds  
hang'd in Kent. [at last,  
The Tigress had unsheath'd her nails  
And Renard and the Chancellor sharp-  
en'd them. [stood.

In every London street a gibbet  
They are down to-day. Here by this  
house was one; [door,

The traitor husband dangled at the  
And when the traitor wife came out  
for bread

To still the petty treason therewithin,  
Her cap would brush his heels.

Staf. It is Sir Ralph,  
And muttering to himself as hereto-  
fore.

Sir, see you aught up yonder?

Bag. I miss something,  
The tree that only bears dead fruit is  
gone.

Staf. What tree, sir? [sir,  
Bag. Well, the tree in Virgil,  
That bears not its own apples.

Staf. What! the gallows?

Bag. Sir, this dead fruit was ripen-  
ing overmuch, [Spain  
And had to be removed lest living  
Should sicken at dead England.

Staf. Not so dead  
But that a shock may rouse her.

Bag. I believe  
Sir Thomas Stafford?

Staf. I am ill disguised.

Bag. Well, are you not in peril  
here?

Staf. I think so.  
I came to feel the pulse of England,  
whether [you see 't?

It beats hard at this marriage. Did  
Bag. Stafford, I am a sad man and  
a serious.

Far liefer had I in my country hall  
Been reading some old book, with  
mine old hound [flask of wine

Couch'd at my hearth, and mine old  
Beside me, than have seen it, yet I  
saw it.

Staf. Good, was it splendid?

Bag. Ay, if Dukes, and Earls,  
And Counts, and sixty Spanish cava-  
liers, [pearls,

Some six or seven Bishops, diamonds,  
That royal commonplace too, cloth  
Could make it so. [of gold,

Staf. And what was Mary's dress?

Bag. Good faith, I was too sorry  
for the woman [shoes!

To mark the dress. She wore red  
shoes?

Staf. Red shoes?

Bag. Scarlet, as if her feet were  
washed in blood,

As if she had waded in it.

Staf. Were your eyes  
So bashful that you look'd no higher?

Bag. A diamond,  
And Philip's gift, as proof of Philip's  
love, [true one,

Who hath not any for any,—tho' a  
Blazed false upon her heart.

Staf. But this proud Prince—

Bag. Nay, he is King, you know,  
the King of Naples.

The father ceded Naples, that the son  
Being a King, might wed a Queen—O  
he [trunk hose,

Flamed in brocade—white satin his  
Inwrought with silver,—on his neck a  
collar, [down from this

Gold, thick with diamonds; hanging  
The Golden Fleece—and round his  
knee, misplaced,

Our English Garter, studded with  
great emeralds, [had enough

Rubies, I know not what. Have you  
Of all this gear?

Staf. Ay, since you hate the  
telling it.

How look'd the Queen?

Bag. No fairer for her jewels.  
And I could see that as the new-made  
couple [by side

Came from the Minster, moving side  
Beneath one canopy, ever and anon

She cast on him a vassal smile of love,

Which Philip, with a glance of some distaste, [wrong, sir.  
Or so methought, return'd. I may be This marriage will not hold.

*Staf.* I think with you.  
The King of France will help to break it.

*Bag.* France!  
We once had half of France, and hurl'd our battles  
Into the heart of Spain; but England now [and Spain,  
Is but a ball chuck'd between France  
His in whose hand she drops; Harry of Bolingbroke

Had holpen Richard's tottering throne to stand, [our nobles  
Could Harry have foreseen that all Would perish on the civil slaughter-field, [crown,  
And leave the people naked to the And the crown naked to the people; the crown [men

Female, too! Sir, no woman's regicane save us. We are fallen, and as I think,  
Never to rise again.

*Staf.* You are too black-blooded.  
I'd make a move myself to hinder that: [France.

I know some lusty fellows there in *Bag.* You would but make us weaker, Thomas Stafford.

Wyatt was a good soldier, yet he And strengthen'd Philip. [fail'd,

*Staf.* Did not his last breath Clear Courtenay and the Princess from the charge  
Of being his co-rebels?

*Bag.* Ay, but then  
What such a one as Wyatt says is nothing: [Lords

We have no men among us. The new Are quieted with their sop of Abbeylands, [Gardiner buys them

And ev'n before the Queen's face With Philip's gold. All greed, no faith, no courage! [umberland,

Why, ev'n the haughty prince, North-The leader of our Reformation, knelt And blubber'd like a lad, and on the scaffold [Rome.

Recanted, and resold himself to *Staf.* I swear you do your country wrong, Sir Ralph.

I know a set of exiles over there, Dare-devils, that would eat fire and spit it out [already.

At Philip's beard: they pillage Spain The French King winks at it. An hour will come

When they will sweep her from the seas. No men? [man?

Did not Lord Suffolk die like a true Is not Lord William Howard a true man? [black-blooded

Yea, you yourself, altho' you are And I, by God, believe myself a man. Ay, even in the church there is a man—Cranmer.

Fly, would he not, when all men bade him fly.

And what a letter he wrote against the Pope?

There's a brave man, if any.  
*Bag.* Ay; if it hold. [Graces! *Crowd* (coming on). God save their *Staf.* Bagenhall, I see

The Tudor green and white. (*Trumpets.*) They are coming now.

And here's a crowd as thick as her-ring-shoals. (we are torn

*Bag.* Be limpets to this pillar, or Down the strong wave of brawlers.

*Crowd.* God save their Graces.  
[*Procession of Trumpeters, Javelin-men, etc.; then Spanish and Flemish Nobles intermingled.*

*Staf.* Worth seeing, Bagenhall! These black dog-Dons

Garb themselves bravely. Who's the long-face there.

Looks very Spain of very Spain?

*Bag.* The Duke Of Alva, an iron soldier.

*Staf.* And the Dutchman, Now laughing at some jest?

*Bag.* William of Orange, William the Silent.

*Staf.* Why do they call him so? *Bag.* He keeps, they say, some secret that may cost

Philip his life.  
*Staf.* But then he looks so merry.

*Bag.* I cannot tell you why they call him so.

[*The King and Queen pass, attended by Peers of the Realm, Officers of State, etc. Cannon shot off.*

*Crowd.* Philip and Mary, Philip and Mary. [Philip and Mary.

Long live the King and Queen, *Staf.* They smile as if content with one another.

*Bag.* A smile abroad is oft a scowl at home.

[*King and Queen pass on. Procession.*

1 *Cit.* I thought this Philip had been one of those black devils of Spain, but he hath a yellow beard.

2 *Cit.* Not red like Iscariot's.

1 *Cit.* Like a carrot's, as thou sayst, and English carrot's better than Spanish licorice; but I thought he was a beast.

3 *Cit.* Certain I had heard that every Spaniard carries a tail like a devil under his trunk hose.

*Tailor.* Ay, but see what trunk-hoses! Lord! they be fine; I never stitch'd none such. They make amends for the tails.

4 *Cit.* Tut! every Spanish priest will tell you that all English heretics have tails.

5 *Cit.* Death and the Devil—if he find I have one—

4 *Cit.* Lo! thou hast call'd them up! here they come—a pale horse for Death and Gardiner for the Devil.

*Enter Gardiner (turning back from the procession).*

*Gard.* Knave, wilt thou wear thy cap before the Queen?

*Man.* My lord, I stand so squeezed among the crowd [head].  
I cannot lift my hands unto my

*Gard.* Knock off his cap there, some of you about him! [hands].

See there be others that can use their Thou art one of Wyatt's men?

*Man.* No, my Lord, no.

*Gard.* Thy name, thou knave?

*Man.* I am nobody, my Lord.

*Gard.* (shouting). God's passion! knave, thy name?

*Man.* I have ears to hear.  
*Gard.* Ay, rascal, if I leave thee ears to hear. [Attendant].

Find out his name and bring it me (to At. Ay, my Lord.

*Gard.* Knave, thou shalt lose thine ears and find thy tongue,

And shalt be thankful if I leave thee that.

[Coming before the Conduit.

The conduit painted—the nine worthies—ay!

But then what's here? King Harry with a scroll. [God!]

Ha—Verbum Dei—verbum—word of God's passion! do you know the knave that painted it?

*At.* I do, my Lord.

*Gard.* Tell him to paint it out, And put some fresh device in lieu of it— [ha?]

A pair of gloves, a pair of gloves, sir; There is no heresy there.

*At.* I will, my Lord. The man shall paint a pair of gloves.

I am sure [ignorantly, (Knowing the man) he wrought it And not from any malice.

*Gard.* Word of God In English! over this the brainless loons [Paul,

That cannot spell Esaias from St. Make themselves drunk and mad, fly

out and flare [burnt. Into rebellions. I'll have their Bibles

The Bible is the priest's. Ay! fellow, what!

[ing rogue. Stand staring at me! shout, you gap—

*Man.* I have, my Lord, shouted till I am hoarse. [knave?—

*Gard.* What hast thou shouted, *Man.* Long live Queen Mary.

*Gard.* Knave, there be two. There be both King and Queen,

Philip and Mary. Shout.

*Man.* Nay, but, my Lord, The Queen comes first, Mary and Philip.

*Gard.* Shout, then Mary and Philip.

*Man.* Mary and Philip! *Gard.* Now,

Thou hast shouted for thy pleasure, shout for mine!

Philip and Mary!

*Man.* Must it be so, my Lord?

*Gard.* Ay knave.

*Man.* Philip and Mary.

*Gard.* I distrust thee.

Thine is a half voice and a lean assent. What is thy name?

*Man.* Sanders.

*Gard.* What else!

*Man.* Zerubbabel.

*Gard.* Where dost thou live?

*Man.* In Cornhill.

*Gard.* Where, knave, where?

*Man.* Sign of the Talbot.

*Gard.* Come to me to-morrow.—Rascal!—this land is like a hill of fire,

One crater opens when another shuts. But so I get the laws against the

heretic, [Iiam Howard, Spite of Lord Paget and Lord Wil-

And others of our Parliament, revived, [and fire—

I will show fire on my side—stake Sharp work and short. The knaves

are easily cow'd. Follow their Majesties.

[Exit. The crowd following.

*Bag.* As proud as Becket.

*Staf.* You would not have him murder'd as Becket was?

*Bag.* No—murder fathers murder: but I say [woman with us—

There is no man—there was one It was a sin to love her married, dead

I cannot choose but love her.

*Staf.* Lady Jane?  
*Crowd (going off).* God save their

Graces.  
*Staf.* Did you see her die?

*Bag.* No, no; her innocent blood had blinded me. [enough,

You call me too black-blooded—true Her dark dead blood is in my heart

with mine. If ever I cry out against the Pope,

Her dark dead blood that ever moves with mine [the cry.

Will stir the living tongue and make *Staf.* Yet doubtless you can tell me

how she died?

*Bag.* Seventeen—and knew eight languages—in music

Peerless—her needle perfect, and her learning [so modest,

Beyond the churchmen: yet so meek, So wife-like humble to the trivial boy

Mismatch'd with her for policy! I have heard [of him,

She would not take a last farewell She fear'd it might unman him for his

end [outwoman'd— She could not be unman'd—no nor

Seventeen—a rose of grace! Girl never breathed to rival such a

rose: [a bud. Rose never blew that equal'd such a

*Staf.* Pray you go on.  
*Bag.* She came upon the scaffold,

And said she was condemn'd to die for treason; [those  
She had but follow'd the device of  
Her nearest kin: she thought they  
knew the laws [law,  
But for herself, she knew but little  
And nothing of the titles to the crown;  
[her hands,  
She had no desire for that, and wrung  
And trusted God would save her thro'  
Of Jesus Christ alone. [the blood  
Staf. Pray you go on.

Bag. Then knelt and said the Miserere Mei— [again,  
But all in English, mark you; rose  
And, when the headsman pray'd to  
be forgiven, [crown at last,  
Said, "You will give me my true  
But do it quickly;" then all wept but  
she, [the block,  
Who changed not color when she saw  
But ask'd him, childlike: "Will you  
take it off [am," he said,  
Before I lay me down?" "No, mad-  
Gasping; and when her innocent eyes  
were bound,  
She, with her poor blind hands feeling  
—"where is it? [which follow'd  
Where is it!"—You must fancy that  
If you have heart to do it!  
Crowd (in the distance). God save  
their Graces!

Staf. Their Graces, our disgraces!  
God confound them!  
Why, she's grown bloodier! when I  
last was here,  
This was against her conscience—  
would be murder!

Bag. The "Thou shalt do no murder," which God's hand  
Wrote on her conscience, Mary rubb'd  
out pale— [that,  
She could not make it white—and over  
Traced in the blackest text of Hell—  
"Thou shalt!"

And sign'd it—Mary!

Staf. Philip, and the Pope  
Must have sign'd too. I hear this  
Legate's coming  
To bring us absolution from the Pope.  
The Lords and Commons will bow  
down before him—

You are of the house? what will you  
do, Sir Ralph? [than the rest,

Bag. And why should I be bolder  
Or honester than all?

Staf. But, sir, if I—  
And over sea they say this state of  
yours [of cards;  
Hath no more mortise than a tower  
And that a puff would do it—then if I  
And others made that move I've  
touch'd upon, [landing here,  
Back'd by the power of France, and  
Came with a sudden splendor, shout,  
and show,  
And dazzled men and deafen'd by  
some bright  
Loud venture, and the people so un-  
quiet—

And I the race of murder'd Bucking-  
ham—

Not for myself, but for the kingdom—  
Sir, [with us.

I trust that you would fight along  
Bag. No; you would fling your  
lives into the gulf. [like to do,

Staf. But if this Philip, as he's  
Left Mary a wife-widow here alone,  
Set up a viceroy, sent his myriads  
hither [make us  
To seize upon the forts and fleet, and  
A Spanish province; would you not  
fight then?

Bag. I think I should fight then.  
Staf. I am sure of it.

Hist! there's the face coming on here  
of one [Fare you well,  
Who knows me. I must leave you.  
You'll hear of me again.

Bag. Upon the scaffold. [Exeunt.

SCENE. II.—Room in Whitehall Palace.

Mary. Enter Philip and Cardinal  
Pole.

Pole. Ava Maria, gratia plena,  
Benedicta tu in mulieribus.

Mary. Loyal and royal cousin,  
humblest thanks. [river?

Had you a pleasant voyage up the  
Pole. We had your royal barge, and  
that same chair,

Or rather throne of purple, on the  
deck.

Our silver cross sparkled before the  
prow, [mond-dance,

The ripples twinkled at their dia-  
The boats that follow'd, were as glow-  
ing-gay [of swans

As regal gardens; and your flocks  
As fair and white as angels; and your  
shores [disc.

Wore in mine eyes the green of Para-  
My foreign friends, who dream'd us  
blanketed [ed

In ever-closing fog, were much amaz-  
To find as fair a sun as might have  
flash'd [Thames;

Upon their Lake of Garda, fire the  
Our voyage by sea was all but miracle;  
[sea,

And here the river flowing from the  
Not toward it (for they thought not of  
our tides), [glide—

Seem'd as a happy miracle to make  
In quiet—home your banish'd country-  
man. [in Flanders, cousin.

Mary. We heard that you were sick  
Pole. A dizziness.

Mary. And how came you round  
again? [saved her life;

Pole. The scarlet thread of Rahab  
And mine, a little letting of the  
Mary. Well? now? blood.

Pole. Ay, cousin, as the heathen  
giant [return'd—

Had but to touch the ground, his force  
Thus, after twenty years of banish-  
ment, [foot,

Feeling my native land beneath my

I said thereto : "Ah, native land of mine,  
Thou art much beholden to this foot  
That hastes with full commission from  
the Pope

To absolve thee from thy guilt of  
heresy.

Thou hast disgraced me and attained  
And mark'd me ev'n as Cain, and I  
return

As Peter, but to bless thee : make  
Methinks the good land heard me, for  
to-day

My heart beats twenty, when I see  
Ah, gentle cousin, since your Herod's  
death.

How oft hath Peter knock'd at Mary's  
And Mary would have risen and let  
him in,

But Mary, there were those within  
Who would not have it.

Mary. True, good cousin Pole ;  
And there were also those without  
Who would not have it.

Pole. I believe so, cousin.  
State-policy and church-policy are con-  
joint,

But Janus-faces looking diverse ways.  
I fear the Emperor much misvalued  
me.

But all is well ; 'twas ev'n the will of  
Who, waiting till the time had ripen'd,  
now,

Makes me his mouth of holy greeting.  
Daughter of God, and savor of the  
faith,

Sit benedictus fructus ventris tui !"  
Mary. Ah, heaven !

Pole. Unwell, your grace ?  
Mary. No, cousin, happy—

Happy to see you ; never yet so happy  
Since I was crown'd.

Pole. Sweet cousin, you forget  
That long low minster where you gave  
your hand

To this great Catholic King.  
Phi. Well said, Lord Legate.

Mary. Nay, not well said ; I thought  
of you, my liege,  
Ev'n as I spoke.

Phi. Ay, Madam ; my Lord Paget  
Waits to present our Council to the  
Legate.

Sit down here, all ; Madam, between  
us you.

Pole. Lo, now you are enclosed with  
boards of cedar,  
O, little sister of the Song of Songs !

You are doubly fenced and shielded  
sitting here  
Between the two most high-set thrones

on earth, [hold'd by  
The Emperor's highness happily sym-  
The King your husband, the Pope's

By mine own self. [Holiness  
Mary. True, cousin, I am happy.

When will you that we summon both  
our houses

To take this absolution from your lips,  
And be gather'd to the Papal fold ?

Pole. In Britain's calendar the  
brightest day [their Gods,  
Beheld our rough forefathers break  
And clasp the faith in Christ ; but  
after that [piest day ?

Might not St. Andrew's be her hap-  
Mary. Then these shall meet upon  
St. Andrew's day.

Enter Paget, who presents the Coun-  
cil. Dumb show.

Pole. I am an old man wearied with  
my journey, [withdraw  
Ev'n with my joy. Permit me to  
To Lambeth ? [Cranmer.

Phi. Ay, Lambeth has ousted  
It was not meet the heretic swine  
In Lambeth. [should live

Mary. There or anywhere, or at all.  
Phi. We have had it swept and  
garnish'd after him.

Pole. Not for the seven devils to  
enter in ? [in the swine.

Phi. No, for we trust they parted  
Pole. True, and I am the Angel of  
Farewell, your Graces. [the Pope.

Phi. Nay, not here—to me ;  
I will go with you to the waterside.  
Pole. Not be my Charon to the  
counter side ?

Phi. No, my Lord Legate, the Lord  
Chancellor goes.

Pole. And unto no dead world ; but  
Lambeth palace, [faith.

Henceforth a centre of the living  
[Exeunt Philip, Pole, Paget, etc

Manet Mary.

He hath awaked ! he hath awaked !  
He stirs within the darkness !

Oh, Philip, husband ! now thy love to  
mine [manners thaw,  
Will cling more close, and those bleak  
That make me shamed and tongue-

tied in my love.  
The second Prince of Peace—  
The great unborn defender of the

Faith,  
Who will avenge me of mine enemies—  
He comes, and my star rises. [lands,

The stormy Wyatts and Northumber-  
The proud ambitions of Elizabeth,  
And all her fieriest partisans—are

pale  
Before my star ! [and dies :  
The light of this new learning wanes

The ghosts of Luther and Zuinglius  
fade [doom  
Into the deathless hell which is their

Before my star ! [to Ind !  
His sceptre shall go forth from Ind  
His sword shall hew the heretic peoples

down ! [will be his,  
His faith shall clothe the world that  
Like universal air and sunshine ! Open,

Ye everlasting gates ! The King is  
My star, my son ! [here !—

Enter Philip, Duke of Alva, etc.  
Oh, Philip, come with me

Good news have I to tell you, news to make [too.  
Both of us happy—ay the Kingdom  
Nay come with me—one moment!

Phi. (to Alva). More than that :  
There was one here of late—William  
the Silent [talk,  
They call him—he is free enough in  
But tells me nothing. You will be, we  
trust, [inces—  
Some time the viceroy of those prov-  
He must deserve his surname better.

Alva. Ay, sir ;  
Inherit the Great Silence.

Phi. True ; the provinces  
Are hard to rule and must be hardly  
ruled ; [rind,  
Most fruitful, yet, indeed, an empty  
All hollowed out with stinging her-  
esies ; [light :  
And for their heresies, Alva, they will  
You must break them or they break  
you.

Alva. (proudly) The first.  
Phi. Good!

Well, Madam, this new happiness of  
mine. [Exeunt.

Enter Three Pages.

1 Page. News, mates ! a miracle ! a  
miracle ! news !

The bells must ring ; Te Deums must  
be sung ; [her babe !

The Queen hath felt the motion of  
2 Page. Ay ; but see here !

1 Page. See what ?  
2 Page. This paper, Dickon.

I found it fluttering at the palace  
gates :— [of a dead dog !

"The Queen of England is delivered  
3 Page. These are the things that  
madden her. Fie upon it.

1 Page. Ay ; but I hear she hath a  
drowsy, lad, [call it.

Or a high-drowsy, as the doctors  
3 Page. Fie on her drowsy, so she  
have a drowsy ! [me.

I know that she was ever sweet to  
1 Page. For thou and thine are  
Roman to the core. [Take heed !

3 Page. So thou and thine must be.  
1 Page. Not I.

And whether this flash of news be  
false or true,  
So the wine run, and there be revelry,  
Content am I. Let all the steeples  
clash,  
Till the sun dance, as upon Easter Day.  
[Exeunt.

SCENE III.—Great Hall in Whitehall  
[At the far end a dais. On this three  
chairs, two under one canopy for  
Mary and Philip, another on the right  
of these for Pole. Under the dais on  
Pole's side, ranged along the wall,  
sit all the Spiritual Peers, and along  
the wall opposite, all the Temporal.  
The Commons on cross benches in  
front, a line of approach to the dais

between them. In the foreground Sir  
Ralph Bagenhall and other Members  
of the Commons.

1 Mem. St. Andrew's day ; sit close,  
sit close, we are friends. [again ?  
Is reconciled the word ? The Pope  
It must be thus ; and yet, cocksbody !  
how strange [of us  
That Gardiner, once so one with all  
Against this foreign marriage, should  
have yielded [still that he,  
So utterly !—strange ! but stranger  
So fierce against the Headship of the  
Pope, [pageant  
Should play the second actor in this  
That brings him in ; such a chameleon  
he !

2 Mem. This Gardiner turn'd his  
coat in Henry's time ;  
The serpent that hath slough'd will  
slough again. [pents.

3 Mem. Tut, then we are all ser-  
2 Mem. Speak for yourself.

3 Mem. Ay, and for Gardiner ! being  
English citizen,  
How should he bear a bridegroom out  
of Spain ?

The Queen would have him ! being  
English churchman, [the Pope ?  
How should he bear the headship of  
The Queen would have it ! Statesmen  
that are wise  
Shape a necessity, as the sculptor clay,  
To their own model.

2 Mem. Statesmen that are wise  
Take truth herself for model, what say  
you ?

[To Sir Ralph Bagenhall.  
Bag. We talk and talk. [talk ?

1 Mem. Ay, and what use to  
Philip's no sudden alien—the Queen's  
husband, [cocksbody !  
He's here, and king, or will be,—yet  
So hated here ! I watched a hive of  
late ; [my young boy ;  
My seven-years' friend was with me,  
Out crept a wasp, with half the swarm  
behind. [rogue

"Philip," says he. I had to cuff the  
For infant treason.

3 Mem. But they say that bees,  
If any creeping life invade their hive  
Too gross to be thrust out, will build  
him round [their combs.  
And bind him in from harming of  
And Philip by these articles is bound  
From stirring hand or feet to wrong  
the realm.

2 Mem. By bonds of beeswax, like  
your creeping thing ;  
But your wise bees had stung him  
first to death.

3 Mem. Hush, hush !  
You wrong the Chancellor : the claus-  
es added [or sent us  
To that same treaty which the emper-  
Were mainly Gardiner's : that no for-  
eigner  
Hold office in the household, fleet,  
forts, army ;

That if the Queen should die without  
a child, [dissolved ;

The bond between the kingdoms be  
That Philip should not mix us any way  
With his French wars—

2 Mem. Ay, ay, but what security,  
Good sir, for this, if Philip—

3 Mem. Peace—the Queen,  
Philip, and Pole. [All rise and stand.  
Enter Mary, Philip, and Pole.

[Gardiner conducts them to the three  
chairs of state. Philip sits on the  
Queen's left, Pole on her right.

Gard. Our short-lived sun, before  
his winter plunge, [drew's day.  
Laughs at the last red leaf, and An-  
Mary. Should not this day be held  
in after years

More solemn than of old ?

Phi. Madam, my wish  
Echoes your Majesty's.

Pole. It shall be so.

Gard. Mine echoes both your  
Graces', (aside) but the Pope—  
Can we not have the Catholic church  
as well [cannot,  
Without as with the Italian ? if we  
Why then the Pope.

My lords of the upper house,  
And ye my masters, of the lower  
house, resolved ?

Do you stand fast by that which ye  
Voices. We do. [supplicate

Gard. And be you all one mind to  
The Legate here for pardon, and ac-  
knowledge

The primacy of the Pope ?

Voices. We are all one mind.

Gard. Then must I play the vassal  
to this Pole. [Aside.

[He draws a paper from under his robes  
and presents it to the King and Queen,  
who look through it and return it to  
him ; then ascends a tribune and  
reads.

We, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal,  
[assembled,

And Commons here in Parliament  
Presenting the whole body of this

realm [same,  
Of England, and dominions of the

Do make most humble suit unto your  
Majesties, [state,

In our own name and that of all the  
That by your gracious means and in-  
tercession

Our supplication be exhibited

To the Lord Cardinal Pole, sent here  
as Legate [Pope,

From our most holy father Julius,  
And from the apostolic see of Rome ;

And do declare our penitence and  
grief

For our long schism and disobedience,  
Either in making laws and ordinances  
Against the Holy Father's primacy,  
Or else by doing or by speaking aught

[same ;  
Which might impugn or prejudice the  
By this our supplication promising,

As well for our own selves as all the  
realm, [quick,  
That now we be and ever shall be  
Under and with your Majesties' au-  
thorities,

To do to the utmost all that in us lies  
Towards the abrogation and repeal  
Of all such laws and ordinances made ;

[ties,  
Whereon we humbly pray your Majes-  
As persons undefiled with our offence,  
So to set forth this humble suit of  
ours [sion

That we the rather by your interces-  
May from the apostolic see obtain,  
Thro' this most reverend Father, ab-  
solution, [censures

And full release from danger of all  
Of Holy Church that we be fall'n into,  
So that we may, as children penitent,  
Be once again received into the bosom  
And unity of Universal Church ;  
And that this noble realm thro' after  
years

May in this unity and obedience  
Unto the holy see and reigning Pope  
Serve God and both your Majesties.

Voices. Amen. [All sit.  
[He again presents the petition to the  
King and Queen, who hand it reve-  
rentially to Pole.

Pole (sitting). This is the loveliest  
day that ever smiled

On England. All her breath should,  
incense like, [of Him  
Rise to the heavens in grateful praise  
Who now recalls her to his ancient  
fold. [given

Lo ! once again God to this realm hath  
A token of His more especial Grace ;  
For as this people were the first of all

[church  
The islands call'd into the dawning  
Out of the dead, deep night of heathen-  
dom,

So now are these the first whom God  
hath given [schism ;  
Grace to repent and sorrow for their  
And if your penitence be not mockery,

[joice  
Oh how the blessed angels who re-  
Over one saved do triumph at this  
hour

In the reborn salvation of a land  
So noble. [A pause.

For ourselves we do protest  
That our commission is to heal, not  
harm ; [cile ;

We come not to condemn, but recon-  
We come not to compel, but call  
again ;

We come not to destroy, but edify ;  
Nor yet to question things already  
done ;

These are forgiven — matters of the  
past—

And range with jetsam and with offal  
thrown

Into the blind sea of forgetfulness.  
[A pause

Ye have reversed the attainer laid  
on us [and we,  
By him who sacked the house of God;  
Amplier than any field on our poor  
earth [sown,  
Can render thanks in fruit for being  
Do here and now repay you sixty-fold,  
A hundred, yea, a thousand thousand  
With heaven for earth. [fold,

[Rising and stretching forth his  
hands. All kneel but Sir Ralph  
Bagenhall, who rises and remains  
standing.

The Lord who hath redeem'd us  
With his own blood, and wash'd us  
from our sins, [bride;  
To purchase for himself a stainless  
He, whom the Father hath appointed  
Head [absolve you!  
Of all his church, He by His mercy  
[A pause.

And we by that authority Apostolic  
Given unto us, his Legate, by the  
Pope,  
Our Lord and Holy Father, Julius,  
God's Vicar and Vicegerent upon  
earth,  
Do here absolve you and deliver you  
And every one of you, and all the  
realm

And its dominions from all heresy,  
All schism, and from all and every  
censure, [upon;  
Judgment, and pain accruing there-  
And also we restore you to the bosom  
And unity of Universal Church.

[Turning to Gardiner.  
Our letters of commission will declare  
this plainlier.

[Queen heard sobbing. Cries of  
Amen! Amen! Some of the mem-  
bers embrace one another. All but  
Sir Ralph Bagenhall pass out in-  
to the neighboring chapel, whence  
is heard the Te Deum.

Bag. We strove against the papacy  
from the first, [ward's time,  
In William's time, in our first Ed-  
And in my master Henry's time; but  
now,  
The unity of Universal Church,  
Mary would have it; and this Gar-  
diner follows;  
The Unity of Universal Hell,  
Philip would have it; and this Gar-  
diner follows!

A Parliament of imitative apes!  
Sheep at the gap which Gardiner  
takes, who not believe—  
Believes the Pope, nor any of them  
These spaniel-Spaniard English of the  
time, [dust,  
Who rub their fawning noses in the  
For that is Philip's gold-dust, and  
adore

This Vicar of their Vicar. Would I  
had been  
Born Spaniard! I had held my head  
up then,

I am ashamed that I am Bagenhall,  
English.

Enter Officer.

Of. Sir Ralph Bagenhall,  
Bag. What of that?

Of. You were the one sole man in  
either house [houses fell,  
Who stood upright when both the  
Bag. The houses fell!

Of. I mean the houses knelt  
Before the Legate.

Bag. Do not scrimp your phrase,  
But stretch it wider; say when Eng-  
land fell. [man who stood,

Of. I say you were the one sole

Bag. I am the one sole man in  
either house [a son.

Perchance in England loves her like

Of. Well, you one man, because  
you stood upright, [to the Tower:

Her Grace the Queen commands you

Bag. As traitor, or as heretic, or  
for what? [be

Of. If any man in any way would  
The one man he shall be so to his  
cost.

Bag. What! will she have my  
head?

Of. A round fine likelier.

Your pardon. [Calling to Attendant.

By the river to the Tower.

[Exeunt.

SCENE IV.—Whitehall. A room in  
the Palace.

Mary, Gardiner, Pole, Paget,  
Bonner, etc.

Mary. The king and I, my Lords,  
now that all traitors [the heads  
Against our royal state have lost  
Wherewith they plotted in their trea-  
sonous malice,

Have talk'd together and are well  
agreed [lardism

That those old statutes touching Lol-  
To bring the heretic to the stake,  
should be [quicken'd.

No longer a dead letter, but re-  
One of the Council. Why, what hath  
fluster'd Gardiner? how he rubs  
His forelock.

Paget. I have changed a word  
with him [again.

In coming, and may change a word

Gard. Madam, your Highness is  
our sun, the King [one;

And you together our two suns in  
And so the beams of both may shine  
upon us, [feel your light,

The faith that seem'd to droop will  
Lift head, and flourish; yet not light  
alone, [heat enough

There must be heat—there must be  
To scorch and wither heresy to the  
root. [to come in."

For what saith Christ? "Compel them  
And what saith Paul? "I would  
they were cut off [ter five!

That trouble you. "Let the dead let

Trace it in fire, that all the louts to  
whom [grooms  
Their A B C is darkness, clowns and  
May read it! so you quash rebellion  
too,

For heretic and traitor are all one :  
Two vipers of one breed — an amphis-  
bona. [letter burn!

Each end a sting: let the dead  
Pag. Yet there be some disloyal  
Catholics, [throats

And many heretics loyal; heretic  
Cried no God-bless-her to the Lady  
Jane, [be

But shouted in Queen Mary. So there  
Some traitor-heretic, there is axe and  
cord. [loyal,

To take the lives of others that are  
And by the churchman's pitiless  
doom of fire, [crown,

Were but a thankless policy in the  
Ay, and against itself; for there are  
many.

Mary. If we could burn out heresy,  
my Lord Paget, [of England—  
We reckon not tho' we lost this crown  
Ay! tho' it were ten Englands!

Gard. Right your Grace.  
Paget, you are all for this poor life of  
ours,

And care but little for the life to be.  
Paget. I have some time, for  
curiousness, my Lord,

Watch'd children playing at *their* life  
to be,

And cruel at it, killing helpless flies;  
Such is our time—all times for aught  
I know. [sting the soul—

Gard. We kill the heretics that  
They, with right reason, flies that  
prick the flesh.

Paget. They had not reach'd right  
reason; little children!

They kill'd but for their pleasure and  
They felt in killing. [the power

Gard. A spice of Satan, ha!  
Why, good! what then? granted!—  
we are fallen creatures;

Look to your Bible, Paget! we are  
fallen. [Lord Bishop,

Paget. I am but of the laity, my  
And may not read your Bible, yet I  
found [the children,

One day a wholesome scripture, "Lit-  
Love one another."

Gard. Did you find a scripture,  
"I come not to bring peace but a  
sword"? The sword [Paget,

Is in her Grace's hand to smite with.  
You stand up here to fight for heresy,  
You are more than guess'd at as a  
heretic, [true faith

And on the steep up-track of the  
Your lapses are far seen.

Paget. The faultless Gardiner!  
Mary. You brawl beyond the ques-  
tion; speak, Lord Legate.

Pole. Indeed, I cannot follow with  
your Grace, [not kill

Rather would say—the shepherd doth

The sheep that wander from his flock,  
but sends [fold.

His careful dog to bring them to the  
Look to the Netherlands, wherein have  
been [end?

Such holocausts of heresy! to what  
For yet the faith is not established  
Gard. The end's not come. [there.

Pole. No—nor this way will come,  
Seeing there lie two ways to every  
end, [here

A better and a worse—the worse is  
To persecute, because to persecute  
Makes a faith hated, and is further-  
more

No perfect witness of a perfect faith  
In him who persecutes: when men are  
tost [sure

On tides of strange opinion, and not  
Of their own selves, they are wroth  
with their own selves,

And thence with others; then, who  
lights the fagot?

Not the full faith, no, but the lurking  
doubt. [the Church,

Old Rome, that first made martyrs in  
Trembled for her own gods, for these  
were trembling—

But when did our Rome tremble?  
Paget. Did she not

In Henry's time and Edward's?  
Pole. What, my Lord!

The Church on Peter's lock? never!  
I have seen

A pine in Italy that cast its shadow  
Athwart a cataract; firm stood the  
pine— [my mind,

The cataract shook the shadow. To  
The cataract typed the headlong plunge  
and fall [Rome.

Of heresy to the pit: the pine was  
You see, my Lords, [trembled;

It was the shadow of the Church that  
Your church was but the shadow of  
Wanting the triple mitre. [a church,

Gard. (muttering). Here be tropes.  
Pole. And tropes are good to clothe  
a naked truth,

And make it look more seemly.  
Gard. Tropes again!

Pole. You are hard to please. Then  
without tropes my Lord,

An overmuch severeness, I repeat,  
When faith is wavering makes the  
waverer pass [doctrines

Into the more settled hatred of the  
Of those who rule, which hatred by  
and by [to light

Involves the ruler (thus there springs  
That Centaur of a monstrous common-  
weal [may quail,

The traitor-heretic) then tho' some  
Yet others are that dare the stake and  
fire, [I orne, begets

And their strong torment bravely  
An admiration and an indignation,  
And hot desire to imitate; so the  
plague

Of schism spreads; were there but  
three or four

Of these misleaders, yet I would not  
say

Burn! and we cannot burn whole  
towns; they are many  
As my Lord Paget says.

*Gard.* Yet my Lord Cardinal—

*Pole.* I am your Legate; please you  
let me finish. [regimen  
Methinks that under our Queen's  
We might go softer than with crimson  
rowel [Henry first

And streaming lash. When Herod  
Began to batter at your English Church  
This was the cause, and hence the  
judgment on her.

She seethed with such adulteries, and  
the lives [so foul

Of many among your churchmen were  
That heaven wept and earth blush'd.  
I would advise

That we should thoroughly cleanse the  
Church within [quicken'd.

Before these bitter statutes be re-  
So after that when she once more is  
seen [of Christ,

White as the light, the spotless bride  
Like Christ himself on Tabor, pos-  
sibly [again;

The Lutheran may be won to her  
Till when, my Lords, I counsel toler-  
ance. [hand my Lord,

*Gard.* What if a mad dog bit your  
Would you not chop the bitten finger  
off, [with the poison?

Lest your whole body should madden  
I would not, were I Queen, tolerate the  
heretic,

No, not an hour. The ruler of a land  
Is bounden by his power and place to  
see [them!

His people be not poison'd. Tolerate  
Why? do they tolerate you? Nay,  
many of them [call they not

Would burn—have burnt each other;  
The one true faith, a loathsome idol-  
worship? [crime

Beware, Lord Legate, of a heavier  
Than heresy is itself; beware I say,  
Lest men accuse you of indifference

To all faith, all religion; for you know  
Right well that you yourself have been  
supposed

Tainted with Lutheranism in Italy.

*Pole (angered).* But you, my Lord,  
beyond all supposition,

In clear and open day were congruent  
With that vile Crammer in the accus-  
ed lie [the spring

Of good Queen Catherine's divorce—  
Of all those evils that have flow'd upon  
us; [tyrant,

For you yourself have trucked to the  
And done your best to bastardize our  
Queen, [fell upon you

For which God's righteous judgment  
In your five years of imprisonment,  
my Lord [ster'd up

Under young Edward. Who so bol-  
The gross King's headship of the  
Church, or more

Denied the Holy Father!

*Gard.* Ha! what! eh?  
But you, my Lord, a polish'd gentle-  
man, [tussle,

A bookman, flying from the heat and  
You lived among your vines and  
oranges, [sent for,

In your soft Italy yonder! You were  
You were appeal'd to, but you still pre-  
ferr'd [did

Your learned leisure. As for what I  
I suffer'd and repented. You, Lord  
Legate [to learn

And Cardinal-Deacon, have not now  
That ev'n St. Peter in his time of fear  
Denied his Master, ay, and thrice, my  
Lord, [years, my Lord.

*Pole.* But not for five and twenty  
*Gard.* Ha! good! it seems then I  
was summon'd hither

But to be mock'd and baited. Speak,  
friend Bonner,

And tell this earned Legate he lacks  
zeal.

The Church's evil is not as the King's.  
Cannot be heal'd by stroking. The  
mad bite [at once,

Must have the cautery—tell him—and  
What wouldst thou do hadst thou his  
power, thou [with me.

That layest so long in heretic bonds  
Wouldst thou not burn and blast them  
root and branch?

*Bon.* Ay, after you, my Lord.  
*Gard.* Nay, God's passion, before  
me! speak. [flame.

*Bon.* I am on fire until I see them  
*Gard.* Ay, the psalm-singing weav-  
ers, cobblers, scum— [genet,

But this most noble prince Planta-  
Our good Queen's cousin—dallying  
over seas [noble mother's

Even when his brother's, nay, his  
Head fell—

*Pole.* Peace, mad man!  
Thou stirrest up a grief thou canst not  
fathom. [Chancellor

Thou Christian Bishop, thou Lord  
Of England? no more rein upon  
thine anger [ashamed

Than any child! Thou mak'st me much  
That I was for a moment wroth at  
thee. [give me feuds,

*Mary.* I come for counsel and ye  
Like dogs that set to watch their mas-  
ter's gate,

Fall, when the thief is ev'n within the  
walls [Chancellor,

To worrying one another. My Lord  
You have an old trick of offending  
us; [with us

And but that you are art and part  
In purging heresy, well we might, for  
this [the Legate,

Your violence and much roughness to  
Have shut you from our counsels  
Cousin Pole, [Retire with me.

You are fresh from brighter lands  
His highness and myself (so you allow  
us)

Will let you learn in peace and privacy

What power this cooler son of England hath  
[pray Heaven  
In breeding Godless vermin. And  
That you may see according to our  
Come, cousin. [sight.

[*Exeunt Queen and Pole, etc.*

*Gard.* Pole has the Plantagenet face.  
[mightiest kings.

But not the force made them our  
Fine eyes—but melancholy, irresolute—  
[fine beard.

A fine beard, Bonner, a very full  
But a weak mouth, an indeterminate  
—ha? [chance.

*Bon.* Well, a weak mouth per-  
*Gard.* And not like thine

To gorge a heretic whole roasted or  
raw. [yet the Legate

*Bon.* I'd do my best, my Lord: but  
Is here as Pope and Master of the  
Church,

And if he go not with you—

*Gard.* Tut, Master Bishop,  
Our bashful Legate, saw'st not how he  
flush'd?

Touch him upon his old heretical talk,  
He'll burn a diocese to prove his or-  
thodoxy. [those times

And let him call me truckler. In  
Thou knowest we had to dodge, or  
duck, or die; [Church;

I kept my head for use of Holy  
And see you, we shall have to dodge  
again, [and plunge

And let the Pope trample our rights,  
His foreign fist into our island  
Church

To plumb the leaner pouch of Italy.  
For a time for a time. [put in force,  
Why? that these statutes may be  
And that his fan may thoroughly  
purge his door.

*Bon.* So then you hold the Pope—  
*Gard.* I hold the Pope!

What do I hold him? what do I hold  
the Pope? [Cardinal's fault—

Come, come, the morsel stuck—this  
I have gulped it down. I am wholly  
for the Pope,

Utterly and altogether for the Pope,  
The Eternal Peter of the changeless  
chair, [king of kings.

Crown'd slave of slaves, and mitred  
God upon earth! what more? what  
would you have?

Hence, let's be gone.

*Enter Usher.*

*Ush.* Well that you be not gone,  
My Lord. The Queen, most wroth at  
first with you, [forgiveness,

Is now content to grant you full  
So that you crave full pardon of the  
Legate.

I am sent to fetch you.

*Gard.* Doth Pole yield, sir, ha!  
Did you hear 'em? were you by?

*Ush.* I cannot tell you,

His bearing is so courtly delicate;  
And yet methinks he falters: their  
two Graces [him,

Do so dear-cousin and royal-cousin  
So press on him the duty which as  
Legate [royal smiles—

He owes himself, and with such  
*Gard.* Smiles that burn men. Bon-  
ner, it will be carried.

He falters, ha? 'fore God we change  
and change; [tours tell you,

Men now are bow'd and old, the doc-  
At three-score years; then if we  
change at all [an age

We needs must do it quickly; it is  
Of brief life, and brief purpose, and  
fury patience, [for it

As I have shown to-day. I am sorry  
If Pole be like to turn. Our old friend  
Cranmer, [so often,

Your more especial love, hath turn'd  
He knows not where he stands, which,  
if this pass, [em look to it,

We two shall have to teach him; let  
Cranmer and Hooper, Ridley and Lat-  
imer, [is come,

Rogers and Ferrar, for their time  
Their hour is hard at hand, their "dies  
Irae," [their sect.

Their "dies Illa," which will test  
I feel it but a duty—you will find in  
it [Bonner,—

Pleasure as well as duty, worthy  
To test their sect. Sir, I attend the  
Queen [most

To crave most humble pardon—of her  
Royal, Infallible, Papal Legate-cousin.  
[*Exeunt.*

#### SCENE V.—Woodstock.

Elizabeth, Lady in Waiting.

*Lady.* The colors of our Queen are  
green and white,  
These fields are only green, they make  
me gape.

*Eliz.* There's a whitethorn, girl.  
*Lady.* Ay, for an hour in May.

But court is always May, buds out in  
masks, [flowers

Breaks into feather'd merriments, and  
In silken pageants. Why do they  
keep us here?

Why still suspect your Grace?

*Eliz.* Hard upon both.

[*Writes on the window with a dia-  
mond.*  
*Much suspected, of me  
Nothing proven can be,  
Quoth Elizabeth, prisoner.*

*Lady.* What hath your Highness  
written?

*Eliz.* A true rhyme.  
*Lady.* Cut with a diamond; so to  
last like truth.

*Eliz.* Ay, if truth last. [out,  
*Lady.* But truth, they say, will

So it must last. It is not like a word,

That comes and goes in uttering.

*Eliz.* Truth, a word !  
The very Truth and very Word are one. [at, girl,

But truth of story, which I glanced  
Is like a word that comes from olden days, [tongue

And passes thro' the peoples : every  
Alters it passing, till it spells and speaks

Quite other than at first.

*Lady.* I do not follow.

*Eliz.* How many names in the long  
sweep of time [but hang

That so foreshortens greatness, may  
On the chance mention of some fool that once

Brake bread with us, perhaps ; and  
my poor chronicle [field

Is but of glass. Sir Henry Beding-  
May split it for a spite.

*Lady.* God grant it last,  
And witness to your Grace's inno-  
cence,

Till doomsday melt it.

*Eliz.* Or a second fire,  
Like that which lately crackled under-  
foot [glass,

And in this very chamber, fuse the  
And char us back again into the dust  
We spring from. Never peacock  
against rain

Scream'd as you did for water.

*Lady.* And I got it.  
I woke Sir Henry—and he's true to  
you—

I read his honest horror in his eyes.

*Eliz.* Or true to you ?

*Lady.* Sir Henry Bedingfield !

I will have no man true to me, your  
Grace, [the clown !

But one that pares his nails ; to me ?  
For, like his cloak, his manners want  
the nap [says,

And gloss of court ; but of this fire he  
Nayswears, it was no wicked wilful-  
ness,

Only a natural chance.

*Eliz.* A chance—perchance  
One of those wicked wilfuls that men  
make, [know

Nor shame to call it nature. Nay, I  
They hunt my blood. Save for my  
daily range [Writ

Among the pleasant fields of Holy  
I might despair. But there hath come  
one come ;

The house is all in movement. Hence,  
and see.

[Exit Lady.

*Milkmaid (singing without).*

*Shame upon you, Robin,  
Shame upon you now !*

*Kiss me would you ? with my hands  
Milking the cow ?*

*Daisies grow again,  
Kingscups blow again,*

*And you came and kiss'd me milking  
the cow.*

*Robin came behind me,  
Kiss'd me well I vow ;  
Cuff him could I ? with my hands  
Milking the cow ?  
Swallows fly again,  
Cuckoos cry again,  
And you came and kiss'd me milking  
the cow.*

*Come, Robin, Robin,  
Come and kiss me now ;  
Help it can I ? with my hands  
Milking the cow ?  
Ringdoves coo again,  
All things woo again,  
Come behind and kiss me milking the  
cow.*

*Eliz.* Right honest and red-cheek'd ;  
Robin was violent,  
And she was crafty—a sweet violence,  
And a sweet craft. I would I were a  
milkmaid, [bake, and die,  
To sing, love, marry, churn, brew,  
Then have my simple headstone by  
the church,  
And all things lived and ended hon-  
estly.

I could not if I would. I am Harry's  
daughter : [are not sweet.  
Gardiner would have my head. They  
The violence and the craft that do  
divide [must lie ;  
The world of nature ; what is weak  
The lion needs but roar to guard his  
young ; [they are there.  
The lawping lies, says " here " when  
Threaten the child ; " I'll scourge  
you if you did it." [soft tongue,  
What weapon hath the child, save his  
To say, " I did not ? " and my rod's  
the block.

I never lay my head upon the pillow  
But that I think, " Wilt thou lie there  
to-morrow ? " [fell,  
How oft the falling axe, that never  
Hath shock'd me back into the day-  
light truth [black, dead  
That it may fall to-day ! Those damp,  
Nights in the Tower ; dead—with the  
fear of death— [of a bell,  
Too dead ev'n for a death-watch ! Toll  
Stroke of a clock, the scurrying of a  
rat

Affrighted me, and then delighted me,  
For there was life—And there was life  
in death— [light,  
The little murder'd princes, in a pale  
Rose hand in hand, and whisper'd,  
" come away,

The civil wars are gone forevermore :  
Thou last of all the Tudors, come away  
[was a dream ;

With us is peace ! " The last ? It  
I must not dream, not wink, but watch.

She has gone, [by  
Maid Marian to her Robin—by and  
Both happy ! a fox may filch a hen by  
night, [yard ;  
And make a morning outcry in the

But there's no Renard here to "catch her tripping."

[have wish'd Catch me who can; yet, sometimes I That I were caught, and kill'd away at once

[Gardiner, Out of the flutter. The gray rogue, Went on his knees, and pray'd me to confess

[self In Wyatt's business, and to cast my-Upon the good Queen's mercy; ay, when, my Lord?

God save the Queen. My jailer—

*Enter Sir Henry Bedingfield.*

*Bed.* One, whose bolts That jail you from free life, bar you from death.

[hereabout There haunt some Papist ruffians Would murder you.

*Eliz.* I thank you heartily, sir, But I am royal, tho' your prisoner, And God hath blest or cursed me with a nose—

Your boots are from the horses.

*Bed.* Ay, my Lady. When next there comes a missive from the Queen

[hour It shall be all my study for one To rose and lavender my horsiness, Before I dare to glance upon your Grace.

[tine she wrote, *Eliz.* A missive from the Queen: last I had like to have lost my life: it takes my breath:

[boots, O God, sir, do you look upon your Are you so small a man? Help me: Is it life or death?

[what think you, *Bed.* I thought not on my boots; The devil take all boots were ever made

[lay it here, Since man went barefoot. See, I For I will come no nearer to your Grace;

[Laying down the letter. And whether it bring you bitter news or sweet,

[or not, And God hath given your Grace a nose I'll help you, if I may.

*Eliz.* Your pardon, then; It is the heat and narrowness of the cage

[free wing That makes the captive testy; with The world were all one Araby. Leave me now,

Will you, companion to myself, sir?

*Bed.* Will I? With most exceeding willingness, I will;

You know I never come until I be call'd.

[Exit. *Eliz.* It lies there folded: is there venom in it?

[sting. A snake—and if I touch it, it may Come, come, the worst!

Best wisdom is to know the worst at once.

[Reads: *It is the King's wish that you should wed Prince Philibert of Savoy. You are to come to Court on the instant; and think of this in your coming.*

*Mary the Queen.* Think! I have many thoughts;

I think there may be birdlime here for me;

[the realm, I think they fain would have me from I think the Queen may never bear a child;

[Queen, I think that I may be some time the Then, Queen indeed: no foreign prince or pries

[the steps. Should fill my throne, myself upon I think I will not marry any one,

Specially not this landless Philibert Of Savoy; but, if Philip menace me,

I think that I will play with Philibert,—

As once the holy father did with mine, Before my father married my good mother,—

For fear of Spain.

*Enter Lady.*

*Lady.* O Lord! your Grace, your Grace,

[shall fly I feel so happy: it seems that we These bald, blank fields, and dance into the sun

That shines on princes.

*Eliz.* Yet, a moment since, I wish'd myself the milkmaid singing here;

[flowers— To kiss and cuff among the birds and A right rough life and heathful.

*Lady.* But the wench Hath her own troubles; she is weeping now;

[word. For the wrong Robin took her at her Then the cow kick'd, and all her milk was spilt.

Your Highness such a milkmaid?

*Eliz.* I had kept My Robins and my cows in sweeter order

Had I been such.

[a Robin? *Lady (stily).* And had your Grace

*Eliz.* Come, come, you are chill here: you want the sun

That shines at court; make ready for the journey.

Pray God, we 'scape the sunstroke. Ready at once.

[Exeunt. SCENE VI.—*London. A Room in the Palace.*

Lord Petre and Lord William Howard.

*Petre.* You cannot see the Queen. Renard denied her,

Ev'n now to me.

*How.* Their Flemish go-between And all-in-all. I came to thank her Majesty

[the Tower; For freeing my friend Bagenhall from A grace to me! Mercy, that herb-of-

Flowers now but seldom.

[grace, *Petre.* Only now perhaps, Because the Queen hath been three days in tears

[hedge-rose For Philip's going—like the wild Of a soft winter, possible, not proba-

ble, However, you have prov'n it.

*How.* I must see her

*Enter Renard.*

*Ren.* My Lords, you cannot see her Majesty.

*How.* Why then the King! for I would have him bring it [Queen, Home to the leisure wisdom of his Before he go, that since these statutes past, [his heat, Gardiner out-Gardiners Gardiner in Bonner cannot out-Bonner his own self— [dren do,

Beast!—but they play with fire as chil- And burn the house. I know that these are breeding [in men A fierce resolve and fixt heart-hate Against the King, the Queen, the Holy Father,

The faith itself. Can I not see him?

*Ren.* Not now.

And in all this, my Lord, her Majesty Is flint of flint, you may strike fire from her, [your message.

Not hope to melt her. I will give [Exit Petre and Howard.

*Enter Philip (musing).*

*Phi.* She will not have Prince Philibert of Savoy, [she will live I talk'd with her in vain—says And die true maid—a goodly creature too [she must have him; Would she had been the Queen! yet She troubles England: that she breathes in England Is life and lungs to every rebel birth That passes out of embryo.

*Simon Renard!*—This Howard, whom they fear, what was he saying? [said, my liege,

*Ren.* What your imperial father To deal with heresy gentlier. Gardiner burns, [this people And Bonner burns; and it would seem Care more for our brief life in their wet land [my Lord

Than yours in happier Spain. I told He should not vex her Highness; she would say [that His church These are the means God works with, May flourish.

*Phi.* Ay, sir, but in statemanship [blow.

To strike too soon is oft to miss the Thou knowest I bade my chaplain, Castro, preach Against these burnings.

*Ren.* And the Emperor Approved you, and when last he wrote, declared [were bland

His comfort in your Grace that you And affable to men of all estates, In hope to charm them from their hate of Spain. [under Spain.

*Phi.* In hope to crush all heresy But, Renard, I am sicker staying here Than any sea could make me passing hence,

Tho' I be ever deadly sick at sea. So sick am I with biding for this child. [women

Is it the fashion in this climate for

To go twelve months in bearing of a child? [they led

The nurses yawn'd, the cradle gaped, Processions, chanted litanies, clash'd their bells, [priests

Shot off their lying cannon, and her Have preach'd, the fools, of this fair prince to come, [fool.

Till, by St. James, I find myself the Why do you lift your eyebrow at me thus? [moved till now.

*Ren.* I never saw your Highness *Phi.* So, weary am I of this wet land of theirs,

And every soul of man that breathes therein.

*Ren.* My liege, we must not drop the mask before

The masquerade is over—

*Phi.* —Have I dropt it?

I have but shown a loathing face to you,

Who knew it from the first.

*Enter Mary.*

*Mary (aside).* With Renard. Still Parleying with Renard, all the day with Renard, me—

And scarce a greeting all the day for And goes to-morrow. [Exit Mary.

*Phi.* (to Renard who advances to him). Well, sir, is there more?

*Ren.* (who has perceived the Queen). May Simon Renard speak a single word?

*Phi.* Ay.

*Ren.* And be forgiven for it?

*Phi.* Simon Renard Knows me too well to speak a single That could not be forgiven. [word

*Ren.* Well, my liege, Your Grace hath a most chaste and loving wife.

*Phi.* Why not? The Queen of Philip should be chaste.

*Ren.* Ay, but, my Lord, you know what Virgil sings,

Woman is various and most mutable. *Phi.* She play the harlot! never.

*Ren.* No, sire, no, Not dream'd of by the rabidest gossipeller. [palace,

There was a paper thrown into the "The King hath wearied of his barren bride." [rent it.

She came upon it, read it, and then With all the rage of one who hates a truth [have you—

He cannot but allow. Sire, I would What should I say, I cannot pick my words— [Queen.

Be somewhat less—majestic to your

*Phi.* Am I to change my manners, Simon Renard, [beasts?

Because these islanders are brutal Or would you have me turn a sonnet-teer,

And warble those brief-sighted eyes of hers?

*Ren.* Brief-sighted tho' they be, I have seen them, sire, [royally  
When you perchance were trifling  
With some fair dame of court, suddenly  
fill [indeed  
With such fierce fire—had it been fire  
It would have burnt both speakers.

*Phi.* Ay, and then?  
*Ren.* Sire, might it not be policy in some matter [to cede  
Of small importance now and then  
A point to her demand?

*Phi.* Well, I am going.  
*Ren.* For should her love when you are gone, my liege, [be wanting  
Witness these papers, there will not  
Those that will urge her injury—  
should her love— [than one—  
And I have known such women more  
Veer to the counterpoint, and jealousy  
Hath in it an alchemic force to fuse  
Almost into one metal love and hate,—  
[Council,

And she impress her wrongs upon her  
And these again upon her Parliament—  
[then perhaps  
We are not loved here, and would  
Not so well holpen in our wars with  
France,  
As else we might be—here she comes.

*Enter Mary.*

*Mary.* O Philip!  
Nay, must you go indeed?

*Phi.* Madam, I must.  
*Mary.* The parting of a husband  
and a wife [half  
Is like the cleaving of a heart; one  
Will flutter here, one there.

*Phi.* You say true, Madam.  
*Mary.* The Holy Virgin will not  
have me yet [a prince.  
Lose the sweet hope that I may bear  
If such a prince were born and you  
not here! [were born.

*Phi.* I should be here if such a prince  
*Mary.* But must you go?

*Phi.* Madam, you know my father,  
Retiring into cloistral solitude  
To yield the remnant of his years to  
heaven, [the world  
Will shift the yoke and weight of all  
From off his neck to mine. We meet  
at Brussels. [long,

But since mine absence will not be for  
Your Majesty shall go to Dover with  
And wait my coming back. [me,

*Mary.* To Dover? no,  
I am too feeble. I will go to Green-  
wich, [there watch  
So you will have me with you; and  
All that is gracious in the breath of  
heaven [land, and pass  
Draw with your sails from our poor  
And leave me, Philip, with my prayers  
for you. [your prayers.

*Phi.* And doubtless I shall profit by  
*Mary.* Methinks that would you  
tarry one day more [myself  
The news was sudden) I could mould

To bear your going better; will you  
do it? [save a realm.

*Phi.* Madam, a day may sink or  
*Mary.* A day may save a heart  
from breaking too. [stop a day?

*Phi.* Well, Simon Renard, shall we  
*Ren.* Your Grace's business will not  
suffer, sire, [tell.

For one day more, so far as I can  
*Phi.* Then one day more to please  
her Majesty. [my life again.

*Mary.* The sunshine sweeps across  
O if I knew you felt this parting,  
As I do! [Philip,

*Phi.* By St. James I do protest,  
Upon the faith and honor of a Span-  
iard, [Majesty.

I am vastly grieved to leave your  
Simon, is supper ready?

*Ren.* Ay, my liege,  
I saw the covers laying.

*Phi.* Let us have it.  
[Exeunt.

# ACT IV.

## SCENE I.—A Room in the Palace.

*Mary, Cardinal Pole.*

*Mary.* What have you there?  
*Pole.* So please your Majesty,  
A long petition from the foreign exiles  
To spare the life of Cranmer. Bishop  
Thiribly, [Howard,  
And my Lord Paget and Lord William  
Crave, in the same cause, hearing of  
your Grace. [ated—  
Hath he not written himself—infatu-  
To sue you for his life?

*Mary.* His life? Oh, no;  
Not sued for that—he knows it were  
in vain.

But so much of the anti-papal leaven  
Works in him yet, he hath pray'd me  
not to sully [the realm  
Mine own prerogative, and degrade  
By seeking justice at a stranger's hand

[Queen,  
Against my natural subject. King and  
To whom he owes his loyalty after God,  
[prince?

Shall these accuse him to a foreign  
Death would not grieve him more. I  
cannot be [Pope

True to this realm of England and the  
Together, says the heretic.

*Pole.* And there errs;  
As he hath ever err'd thro' vanity.  
A secular kingdom is but as the body  
Lacking a soul; and in itself a beast.  
The Holy Father in a secular kingdom  
Is as the soul descending out of heaven  
Into a body generate.

*Mary.* Write to him, then.  
*Pole.* I will.

*Mary.* And sharply, Pole.  
*Pole.* Here come the Cranmerites!  
*Enter Thiribly, Lord Paget, Lord Wil-*  
liam Howard.

*How.* Health to your Grace, Good-morrow, my Lord Cardinal;  
We make our humble prayer unto your Grace [eign parts,  
That Cranmer may withdraw to for-  
Or into private life within the realm.  
In several bills and declarations,  
Madam,

He hath recanted all his heresies.

*Page.* Ay, ay; if Bonner have not  
fo ged the bills. [Aside

*Mary.* Did not More die, and Fisher?  
he must burn.

*How.* He hath recanted, Madam.

*Mary.* The better for him.  
He burns in Purgatory, not in Hell.

*How.* Ay, ay, your Grace; but it was  
never seen

That any one recanting thus at full,  
As Cranmer hath, came to the fire on  
earth.

*Mary.* It will be seen now, then.

*Thi.* O Madam, Madam!  
I thus implore you, low upon my knees,  
[friend.

To reach the hand of mercy to my  
I have err'd with him; with him I have  
recanted.

What human reason is there why my  
friend

Should meet with lesser mercy than  
myself? [a riot

*Mary.* My Lord of Ely, this. After  
We hang the leaders, let their follow-  
ing go.

Cranmer is head and father of these  
heresies, [God

New learning as they call it; yea, may  
Forget me at most need when I forget  
Her foul divorce—my sainted mother—  
No!— [doubted there.

*How.* Ay, ay, but mighty doctors  
The Pope himself waver'd; and more  
than one [wit,

Row'd in that galley—Gardiner to  
Whom truly I deny not to have been  
Your faithful friend and trusty coun-  
cillor. [book,

Hath not your Highness ever read his  
His tractate upon True Obedience,  
Writ by himself and Bonner?

*Mary.* I will take  
Such order with all bad heretical books  
[house and live,

That none shall hold them in his  
Henceforward. No, my Lord.

*How.* Then never read it.  
The truth is here. Your father was a  
man [courteous,

Of such colossal kingdom, yet so  
Except when wroth, you scarce could  
meet his eye

And hold your own; and were he wroth  
indeed,

You held it less, or not at all. I say,  
Your father had a will that beat men  
down; [men down—

Your father had a brain that beat  
*Pole.* Not me, my Lord.

*How.* No, for you were not here,

You sit upon this fallen Cranmer's  
throne; [Lord Legate,

And it would more become you, my  
To join a voice, so potent with her  
Highness, [stand

To ours in plea for Cranmer than to  
On naked self-assertion.

*Mary.* All your voices  
Are waves on flint. The heretic must  
burn. [esty's own life;

*How.* Yet once he saved your Maj-  
Stood out against the King in your  
At his own peril. [behalf,

*Mary.* I know not if he did;  
And if he did I care not, my Lord

Howard.

My life is not so happy, no such boon,  
That I should spare to take a heretic  
priest's, [you vex me?

Who saved it or not saved. Why do  
*Page.* Yet to save Cranmer were  
to save the Church,

Your Majesty's I mean; he is effaced,  
Self-blotted out; so wounded his honor,  
[hole

He can but creep down into some dark  
Like a hurt beast, and hide himself  
and die; [Highness knows

But if you burn him,—well, your  
The saying, "Martyr's blood—seed  
of the Church."

*Mary.* Of the true Church; but his  
is none, nor will be.

You are too politic for me, my Lord  
Paget, [life,

And if he have to live so loath'd a  
It were more merciful to burn him  
now. [knew him

*Thi.* O yet relent. O, Madam, if you  
As I do, ever gentle, and so gracious,  
With all his learning—

*Mary.* Yet a heretic still.  
His learning makes his burning the  
more just. [came across him;

*Thi.* So worship't of all those that  
The stranger at his hearth, and all his  
house— [bine, belike.

*Mary.* His children and his concu-  
*Thi.* To do him any wrong was to  
beget [was rich,

A kindness from him, for his heart  
Of such fine mould, that if you sow'd  
therein [ity.

The seed of Hate, it blossom'd Char-  
*Pole.* "After his kind it costs him  
nothing," there's [point.

An old world English adage to the  
These are but natural graces, my good  
Bishop, [flowers,

Which in the Catholic garden are as  
But on the heretic dunghill only weeds.  
[gracious.

*How.* Such weeds make dunghills  
*Mary.* Enough, my Lords.

It is God's will, the Holy Father's will,  
And Philip's will, and mine, that he  
should burn.

He is pronounced anathema.

*How.* Farewell, Madam

God grant you ampler mercy at your  
call

Than you have shown to Cranmer.

[*Exeunt* Lords.

*Pole.*

After this,

Your Grace will hardly care to over-  
look [exiles,

This same petition of the foreign  
For Cranmer's life.

*Mary.* Make out the writ to-night.

SCENE II.—*Oxford. Cranmer in prison.*

*Cran.* Last night I dream'd the  
fagots were alight, [stake,

And that myself was fasten'd to the  
And found it all a visionary flame,

Cool as the light in old decaying wood;  
[a cloud,

And then King Harry look'd from out  
And bade me have good courage; and

I heard [heaven,"—

An angel cry, "there is more joy in  
And after that, the trumpet of the

dead. [*Trumpets without.*

Why, there are trumpets blowing now;  
what is it?

*Enter* Father Cole.

*Cole.* Cranmer, I come to question  
you again; [olic Faith,

Have you remain'd in the true Cath-  
I left you in?

*Cran.* In the true Catholic faith,  
By Heaven's grace, I am more and

more confirm'd. [th<sup>r</sup> Cole?

Why are the trumpets blowing, Fa-  
*Cole.* Cranmer, it is decided by the

Council [cantation

That you to-day should read your re-  
Before the people in St. Mary's

Church.

And there be many heretics in the town,  
Who loathe you for your late return to

Rome, [the street,

And might assail you passing through  
And tear you piecemeal: so you have

a guard. [thank the Council.

*Cran.* Or seek to rescue me. I  
*Cole.* Do you lack any money?

*Cran.* Nay, why should I?  
The prison fare is good enough for me.

*Cole.* Ay, but to give the poor.  
*Cran.* Hand it me, then!

I thank you.

*Cole.* For a little space, farewell;  
Until I see you in St. Mary's Church.

[*Exit* *Cole.*

*Cran.* It is against all precedent to  
burn [don me,

One who recants; they mean to par-  
To give the poor—they give the poor

who die. [fixt:

Well, burn me or not burn me I am  
It is but a communion, not a mass;

A holy supper, not a sacrifice;  
No man can make his Maker—Villa

Garcia.

*Enter* Villa Garcia.

*V. G.* Pray you write out this  
paper for me, Cranmer.

*Cran.* Have I not writ enough to  
satisfy you?

*V. G.* It it the last.

*Cran.* Give it me, then. [*He writes.*

*V. G.* Now sign.

*Cran.* I have sign'd enough, and I  
will sign no more.

*V. G.* It is no more than what you  
have sign'd already,

The public form thereof.

*Cran.* It may be so;  
I sign it with my presence, if I read

it. [sir, well,

*V. G.* But this is idle of you. Well,  
You are to beg the people to pray for

you; [life;

Exhort them to a pure and virtuous  
Declare the Queen's right to the

throne; confess [and retract

Your faith before all your hearers;  
That Eucharistic doctrine in your

Will you not sign it now? [book.

*Cran.* No, Villa Garcia,  
I sign no more. Will they have mercy

on me? [cy. So, farewell

*V. G.* Have you good hopes of mer-  
[*Exit.*

*Cran.* Good hopes, not theirs, have  
I that I am fixt.

Fixt beyond fall; however, in strange  
hours, [quies,

After the long brain-dazing collo-  
And thousand-times recurring argu-  
ment

Of those two friars ever in my prison,  
When left alone in my despondency,

Without a friend, a book, my faith  
would seem [heavily

Dead or half-drown'd, or else swam  
Against the huge corruptions of the

Church,

Monsters of mistradition, old enough  
To scare me into dreaming, "what

am I, [it so,

Cranmer, against whole ages!" was  
Or am I slandering my most inward

friend, foe—

To veil the fault of my most outward  
The soft and tremulous coward in the

flesh?

O higher, holier, earlier, purer church,  
I have found thee and not leave thee

any more.

It is but a communion, not a mass—  
No sacrifice, but a life-giving feast!

[*Writes.* So, so; this will I say—thus  
will I pray. [*Puts up the paper.*

*Enter* Bonner.

*Bon.* Good-day, old friend; what,  
you look somewhat worn:

And yet it is a day to test your health  
Ev'n at the best; I scarce have spoken

with you [your trial

Since when?—your degradation. At  
Never stood up a bolder man than

you; [missioner—  
You would not cap the Pope's com-  
Your learning, and your stoutness,

and your heresy,  
Dumfounded half of us. So, after that,

We had to dis-archbishop and unlord.  
And make you simple Crammer once again.

The common barber clipt your hair,  
and I [holy oil;

Scraped from your finger-points the  
And worse than all, you had to kneel  
to me: [Master Crammer.

Which was not pleasant for you,  
Now you, that would not recognize the  
Pope, [Presence,

And you, that would not own the Real  
Have found a real presence in the  
stake, [ancient faith;

Which frights you back into the  
And so you have recanted to the Pope.  
How are the mighty fallen, Master

Crammer!

*Cran.* You have been more fierce  
against the Pope than I;

But why fling back the stone he  
strikes me with? [*Aside.*

O Bonner, if I ever did you kindness—  
Power hath been given you to try  
faith by fire—

Pray you, remembering how yourself  
have changed, [gone,

Be somewhat pitiful, after I have  
To the poor flock—to women and to  
children— [me,

That when I was archbishop held with  
*Bon.* Ay—gentle as they call you—  
live or die!

Pitiful to this pitiful heresy?

I must obey the Queen and Council,  
man, [yourself,

Win thro' this day with honor to  
And I'll say something for you—so—  
good-by. [*Exit.*

*Cran.* This hard coarse man of old  
hath crouch'd to me [him,

Till I myself was half ashamed for

*Enter Thirlby.*

Weep not, good Thirlby.

*Thi.* Oh, my Lord, my Lord!  
My heart is no such block as Bonner's  
Who would not weep? [is:

*Cran.* Why do you so my lord me,  
Who am disgraced? [ven

*Thi.* On earth; but saved in hea-  
By your recanting.

*Cran.* Will they burn me, Thirlby?

*Thi.* Alas, they will; these burn-  
ings will not help

The purpose of the faith; but my poor  
voice

Against them is a whisper to the roar  
Of a spring tide. [me?

*Cran.* And they will surely burn  
*Thi.* Ay; and besides, will have  
you in the church

Repeat your recantation in the ears  
Of all men, to the saving of their  
souls, [help you

Before your execution. May God  
Thro' that hard hour. [*Thirlby.*

*Cran.* And may God bless you,  
Well, they shall hear my recantation  
there. [*Exit Thirlby.*

Disgraced, dishonor'd!—not by them,  
indeed,

By mine own self—by mine own hand!  
O thin-skinn'd hand and jutting veins,

'twas you [of Kent;

That sign'd the burning of poor Joan  
But then she was a witch. You have  
written much, [for Faith,

But you were never raised to plead  
Whose dogmas I have reach'd: he was  
deliver'd [was Lambert;

To the secular arm to burn; and there  
Who can forsee himself? truly these  
burnings, [burners,

As Thirlby says, are profitless to the  
And help the other side. You shall  
burn too,

Burn first when I am burnt.  
Fire—inch by inch to die in agony!

*Latimer* [burn'd

Had a brief end—not Ridley. Hooper  
Three-quarters of an hour. Will my  
fagots [rain.

Be wet as his were? It is a day of  
I will not muse upon it, [makes

My fancy takes the burner's part, and  
The fire seem even crueller than it is.

No, I not doubt that God will give me  
Albeit I have denied him. [strength,

*Enter Soto and Villa Garcia.*

*V. G.* We are ready

To take you to St. Mary's, Master  
Crammer.

*Cran.* And I: lead on; ye loose me  
from my bonds. [*Exeunt.*

*SCENE III.—St. Mary's Church.*

*Cole in the Pulpit,* Lord Williams of  
Thame *presiding.* Lord William

Howard, Lord Paget, and others.

*Crammer enters between Soto and  
Villa Garcia, and the whole Choir  
strike up "Nunc Dimittis."*

*Crammer is set upon a Scaffold before  
the people.*

*Cole.* Behold him—

[*A pause: people in the foreground.*  
*People.* Oh, unhappy sight!

*1 Prot.* See how the tears run down  
his fatherly face.

*2 Prot.* James, didst thou ever see  
a carrion crow [dies?

Stand watching a sick beast before he

*1 Prot.* Him perch'd up there? I  
wish some thunderbolt

Would make this Cole a cinder, pulpit  
and all.

*Cole.* Behold him, brethren: he  
hath cause to weep!— [will,

So have we all: weep with him if ye  
Yet—

It is expedient for one man to die,  
Yea, for the people, lest the people  
die. [return'd

Yet wherefore should he die that hath  
To the one Catholic Universal Church,  
Repentant of his errors.

*Prot. murmurs.* Ay, tell us that.

*Cole.* Those of the wrong side will  
despise the man,

Deeming him one that thro' the fear  
of death

Gave up his cause, except he seal his  
faith [dom.]

In sight of all with flaming martyr-  
Cran. Ay. [may seem]

Cole. Ye hear him, and albeit there  
According to the canons pardon due

To him that so repents, yet are there  
causes [this time]

Wherefore our Queen and Council at  
Adjudge him to the death. He hath

been a traitor,  
A shaker and confounder of the realm;

And when the King's divorce was  
sued at Rome

He here, this heretic metropolitan,  
As if he had been the Holy Father,

sat  
And judg'd it. Did I call him heretic?

A huge heresiarch! never was it  
known

That any man so writing, preaching so,  
So poisoning the Church, so long con-  
tinuing, [must die]

Hath found his pardon; therefore he  
For warning and example.

Other reasons  
There be for this man's ending, which

our Queen [not  
And Council at this present deem it

Expedient to be known.

Prot. murmurs. I warrant you.  
Cole. Take therefore, all, example

by this man,  
For if our Holy Queen not pardon him,

Much less shall others in like cause  
escape, [lowest]

That all of you, the highest as the  
May learn there is no power against

the Lord. [degree]

There stands a man, once of so high  
Chief prelate of our Church, arch-  
bishop, first

In Council, second person in the  
realm,

Friend for so long time of a mighty  
King; [based]

And now ye see downfallen and de-  
From councillor to caitiff — fallen so

low, [scum]

The leprous flutterings of the byway,  
And offal of the city would not change

Estates with him; in brief, so miser-  
ble, [him]

There is no hope of better left for  
No place for worse.

Yet, Crammer, be thou glad.  
This is the work of God. He is glori-  
fied [claim'd]

In thy conversion: lo! thou art re-  
He brings thee home; nor fear but

that to-day [thief's award]

Thou shalt receive the penitent  
And be with Christ the Lord in Para-  
dise. [fire seem]

Remember how God made the fierce  
To those three children like a pleasant

dew.  
Remember, too,

The triumph of St. Andrew on his  
cross, [fire]

The patience of St. Lawrence in the  
Thus, if thou call on God and all the

saints, [flame]

God will beat down the fury of the  
Or give thee saintly strength to under-  
go. [sung]

And for thy soul shall masses here be  
By every priest in Oxford. Pray for

him. [pray for me]

Cran. Ay, one and all, dear brothers,  
Pray with one breath, one heart, one

soul, for me. [you doubt]

Cole. And now, lest any one among  
The man's conversion and remorse of

heart, [Speak Master Crammer,  
Yourselves shall hear him speak.

Fulfil your promise made me, and pro-  
claim [may hear]

Your true undoubted faith, that all  
Cran. And that I will. O God,

Father of Heaven! [world!]  
O Son of God, Redeemer of the

O Holy Ghost! proceeding from them  
both, [mercy on me]

Three persons and one God, have  
Most miserable sinner, wretched

man. [earth]

I have offended against heaven and  
More grievously than any tongue can

tell.  
Then whither should I flee for any

help? [heaven]

I am ashamed to lift my eyes to  
And I can find no refuge upon earth.

Shall I despair then?—God forbid! O  
God,

For thou art merciful, refusing none  
That come to Thee for succor; unto

Thee, [to Thee]

Therefore, I come; humble myself  
Saying, O Lord God, although my sins

be great, [God the Son]

For thy great mercy have mercy! O  
Not for slight faults alone, when thou

becamest  
Man in the Flesh, was the great mys-  
tery wrought;

O God the Father, not for little sins  
Didst thou yield up thy Son to human

death; [sinn'd]

But for the greatest sin that can be  
Yea, even such as mine, incalculable,

Unpardonable,—sin against the light,  
The truth of God, which I had proven

and known. [sin]

Thy mercy must be greater than all  
Forgive me, Father, for no merit of

mine,  
But that thy name by man be glorified,

And thy most blessed Son's who died  
for man. [death]

Good people, every man at time of  
Would fain set forth some saying that

may live  
After his death and better human-  
kind;

For death gives life's last word a  
power to live,

And, like the stone-cut epitaph, remain  
 After the vanish'd voice, and speak  
 God grant me grace to glorify my God!  
 And first I say it is a grievous case,  
 Many so dote upon this bubble world,  
 Whose colors in a moment break and  
 They care for nothing else. What saith St. John:  
 "Love of this world is hatred against  
 Again, I pray you all that, next to God,  
 You do un murmuringly and willingly  
 Obey your King and Queen, and not  
 for dread  
 Of these alone, but from the fear of  
 Whose ministers they be to govern you.  
 Thirdly, I pray you all to love to-  
 Like brethren; yet what hatred Christian men  
 Bear to each other, seeming not as  
 But mortal foes! But do you good to all  
 As much as in you lieth. Hurt no  
 Than you would harm your loving natural brother  
 Of the same roof, same breast. If  
 Albeit he think himself at home with God,  
 Of this be sure, he is whole worlds  
 Protestant murmurs.. What sort of  
 brothers then be those that lust  
 To burn each other?  
 Will. Peace among you, there.  
 Cran. Fourthly, to those that own  
 exceeding wealth,  
 Remember that sore saying spoken  
 By Him that was the truth, "how hard it is  
 For the rich man to enter into  
 Let all rich men remember that hard word.  
 I have not time for more: if ever,  
 Let them flow forth in charity, seeing now  
 The poor so many, and all food so  
 Long have I lain in prison, yet have heard  
 Of all their wretchedness. Give to  
 Yet give to God. He is with us in the poor.  
 And now, and forasmuch as I have  
 To the last end of life, and thereupon  
 Hangs all my past, and all my life to be,  
 Either to live with Christ in Heaven  
 Or to be still in pain with devils in hell;  
 And, seeing in a moment, I shall find  
 Heaven or else hell ready to swallow me,  
 I shall declare to you my very faith  
 Without all color.  
 Cole. Hear him my good brethren.  
 Cran. I do believe in God, Father of all;

In every article of the Catholic faith,  
 And every syllable taught us by our Lord,  
 His prophets and apostles, in the Testa-  
 Both Old and New.  
 Cole. Be plainer, Master Cranmer.  
 Cran. And now I come to the great  
 cause that weighs  
 Upon my conscience more than any  
 Or said or done in all my life by me;  
 For there be writings I have set  
 abroad  
 Against the truth I knew within my  
 Written for fear of death, to save my  
 life,  
 If that might be; the papers by my  
 Sign'd since my degradation—by this  
 hand  
 Written and sign'd—I here renounce  
 them all;  
 And, since my hand offended, having  
 Against my heart, my hand shall first  
 be burnt,  
 So I may come to the fire.

[Dead silence.

Protestant murmurs.

1 Prot. I knew it would be so.

2 Prot. Our prayers are heard!

3 Prot. God bless him!

Catholic murmurs. Out upon him!  
 out upon him!

Liar! dissembler! traitor! to the fire!

Will. (raising his voice). You know  
 that you recanted all you said

Touching the sacrament in that same  
 book

You wrote against my Lord of Win-  
 Dissemble not; play the plain Chris-  
 tian man.

Cran. Alas, my Lord,

I have been a man loved plainness all  
 my life;

I did dissemble, but the hour has come  
 fore, I say,

For utter truth and plainness; where-  
 I hold by all I wrote within that book.

Moreover,  
 As for the Pope I count him Anti-  
 With all his devil's doctrines; and re-  
 fuse,

Reject him, and abhor him. I have  
 said.

[Cries on all sides, "Pull him  
 down! Away with him."

Cole. Ay, stop the heretic's mouth.  
 Hail him away.

Will. Harm him not, harm him not,  
 have him to the fire.

[Cranmer goes out between two  
 Friars, smiling; hands are reached  
 to him from the crowd. Lord Wil-  
 liam Howard and Lord Paget are  
 left alone in the church.

Paget. The nave and aisles all  
 empty as a fool's jest!

No, here's Lord William Howard.  
 What, my Lord,

You have not gone to see the burning!  
 How, He!

To stand at ease, and stare as at a show,  
And watch a good man burn. Never  
I saw the deaths of Latimer and Ridley.

Moreover, tho' a Catholic, I would  
For the pure honor of our common  
nature.  
Hear what I might—another recan-  
Of Cranmer at the stake.

*Paget.* You'd not hear that.  
He pass'd out smiling, and he walk'd  
upright;  
His eye was like a soldier's whom the  
He looks to and he leans on as his  
God,

Hath rated for some backwardness  
and bidd'n him  
Charge one against a thousand, and  
Hurls his soil'd life against the pikes  
and dies.

*How.* Yet that he might not after  
Of recantation yield again, who  
knows?

*Paget.* Papers of recantation,  
That Cranmer read all papers that  
he sign'd?  
Or sign'd all those they tell us that he  
Nay, I trow not: and you shall see,  
my Lord,

That howsoever hero-like the man  
Dies in the fire, this Bonner or another  
Will in some lying fashion misreport  
His ending to the glory of their  
church.

And you saw Latimer and Ridley die?  
Latimer was eighty, was he not? his  
Of life was over then.

*How.* His eighty years  
Look'd somewhat crooked on him in  
his frieze.  
But after they had stript him to his  
He stood upright, a lad of twenty-one,  
And gather'd with his hands the start-  
ing flame,  
And wash'd his hands and all his face  
Until the powder suddenly blew him  
dead.

Ridley was longer burning; but he  
As manfully and boldly, and 'fore  
God,  
I know them heretics, but right Eng-  
If ever, as heaven grant, we clash with  
Spain,

Our Ridley-soldiers and our Latimer-  
Will teach her something.

*Paget.* Your mild Legate Pole  
Will tell you that the devil helpt them  
thro' it.

*[A murmur of the crowd in the dis-  
tance.]*

Hark, how those Roman wolfdogs  
bowl and bay him.

*How.* Might it not be the other side  
rejoicing  
In his brave end?

*Paget.* They are too crush'd, too  
broken,

They can but weep in silence.

*How.* Ay, ay, Paget,

They have brought it in large meas-  
ure on themselves. [blessed Host  
Have I not heard them mock the  
In songs so lewd, the beast might  
roar his claim

To being in God's image, more than  
Have I not seen the gamekeeper, the  
groom,  
Gardener and huntsman, in the par-  
The parson from his own spire swung  
out dead,

And Ignorance crying in the streets,  
Regarding her? I say they have drawn  
the fire

On their own heads: yet, Paget, I  
The Catholic, if he have the greater  
Hath been the crueller.

*Paget.* Action and re-action,  
The miserable see-saw of our child-  
world,

Make us despite it at odd hours, my  
Heaven help that this re-action not  
re-act

Yet fiercelier under Queen Elizabeth,  
So that she come to rule us.

*How.* The world's mad.

*Paget.* My Lord, the world is like a  
drunken man,

Who cannot move straight to his end—  
but reels

Now to the right, then as far to the  
left,

Push'd by the crowd beside—and  
An earthquake; for since Henry for  
a doubt—

Which a young lust had clapt upon  
Crying, "Forward,"—set our old  
church rocking, men

Have hardly known what to believe,  
They should believe in anything;  
the currents

So shift and change, they see not how  
Nor whither. I conclude the King a  
beast;

Verily a lion if you will—the world  
A most obedient beast and fool—my-  
self

Half beast and fool as appertaining  
Altho' your Lordship hath as little of  
each

Cleaving to your original Adam-clay,  
As may be consonant with mortality.

*How.* We talk and Cranmer suffers.  
The kindest man I ever knew; see,  
see,

I speak of him in the past. Unhappy  
Hard-natured Queen, half Spanish in  
herself,

And grafted on the hard-grain'd  
Her life, since Philip left her, and she  
lost

Her fierce desire of bearing him a  
Hath, like a brief and bitter winter's  
day,

Gone narrowing down and darkening  
There will be more conspiracies, I  
fear.

*Paget.* Ay, ay, beware of France.

*How.* O Paget, Paget!

I have seen heretics of the poorer sort,

Expectant of the rack from day to day,  
To whom the fire were welcome, lying  
chain'd, [ing sewers,

In breathless dungeons over steam-  
Fed with rank bread that crawl'd upon  
the tongue,

And putrid water, every drop a worm,  
Until they died of rotted limbs; and  
then [come

Cast on the dunghill naked, and be-  
Hideously alive again from head to  
heel,

Made even the carrion-nosing mon-  
With hate and horror. [grel vomit  
Paget. Nay, you sicken me

To hear you.  
How. Fancy-sick; these things  
are done, [Queen

Done right against the promise of this  
Treaty given.

Paget. No faith with heretics,  
my Lord! [pellers,

Hist! there be two old gossips—gos-  
I take it; stand behind the pillar  
here; [burning.

I warrant you they talk about the  
Enter Two Old Women. Joan, and  
after her Tib.

Joan. Why, it be Tib.

Tib. I cum behind tha, gall, and  
couldn't make tha hear. Eh, the  
wind and the wet! What a day, what  
a day! nigh upo' judgment daay loike.  
Pwoaps be pretty things, Joan, but  
they wunt set i' the Lords' cheer o'  
that daay.

Joan. I must set down myself,  
Tib; it be a var waay vor my owld  
legs up vro' Islip. Eh, my rheuma-  
tizy be that bad howiver be I to win  
to the burnin'.

Tib. I should saay 'twur ower by  
now. I'd ha' been here avore, but  
Dumble wur blow'd wi' the wind, and  
Dumble's the best milcher in Islip.

Joan. Our Daisy's as good 'z her.  
Tib. Noa, Joan.

Joan. Our Daisy's butter's as good  
Tib. Noa, Joan. [z hern.

Joan. Our Daisy's cheeses be bet-  
Tib. Noa, Joan. [ter.

Joan. Eh, then ha' thy waay wi' me,  
Tib; ez thou hast wi' thy owld man.

Tib. Ay, Joan, and my owld man  
wur up and awaay betimes wi' dree  
hard eggs for a good plect at the  
burnin'; and barrin' the wet, Hodge  
'ud ha' been a-harrowin' o' white  
peasen i' the outfield—and barrin' the  
wind, Dumble wur blow'd wi' the  
wind, so 'z we was forced to stick her,  
but we fetched her round at la-t.  
Thank the Lord therefore. Dumble's  
the best milcher in Islip.

Joan. Thou's thy way wi' man and  
beast, Tib. I wonder at tha', it beats  
me! Eh, but I do know ez Pwoaps  
and vires be bad things; tell 'ee now,  
I heerd summat as summun towld  
summun o' owld Bishop Gardiner's

end; there wur an owld lord a-cum to  
dine wi' un, and a wur so owld a  
couldn't bide vor his dinner, but a had  
to bide howsomiver, vor, "I wunt  
dine," says my Lord Bishop, says he,  
"not till I hears ez Latimer and  
Ridley be a-vire;" and so they bided  
on and on till your o'clock, till his  
man cum in post vro' here, and tells  
un ez the vires has tukholt. "Now,"  
says the bishop, says he, "we'll gwo  
to dinner;" and the owld lord fell to  
's meat wi' a will, God bless un; but  
Gardiner wur struck down like by the  
hand-o' God avore a could taste a  
mossel, and a set him all a-vire, so 'z  
the tongue on un cum a lolluping out  
o' 'is mouth, as black as a rat. Thank  
the Lord, therefore.

Paget. The fools!

Tib. Ay, Joan; and Queen Mary  
gwoes on a-burnin' and a burnin', to  
git her baaby born; but all her burn-  
ins 'ill never burn out the hypocrisy  
that makes the water in her. There's  
nought but the vires of God's hell ez  
can burn out that.

Joan. Thank the Lord, therefore.

Paget. The fools!

Tib. A-burnin', and a-burnin', and a-  
makin' o' volk madder and madder;  
but tek thou my word vor't, Joan,—  
and I bean't wrong not twice i' ten  
year—the burnin' o' the owld arch-  
bishop 'ill burn the Pwoap out o' this  
'ere land vor iver and iver.

How. Out of the church, you brace  
of cursed crones,  
Or I will have you duck'd.

[Women hurry out.

Said I not right?

For how should reverend prelate or  
throned prince [nity?  
Brook for an hour such brute malig-  
Ah, what an acrid wine has Luther  
brew'd!

Paget. Pooh, pooh, my Lord! poor  
garrulous countrywives.

Buy you their cheeses, and they'll side  
with you; [the lees.

You cannot judge the liquor from  
How. I think that in some sort we  
may. But see,

Enter Peters.

Peters, my gentleman, an honest  
Catholic, [Cranmer's fire.  
Who follow'd with the crowd to  
One that would neither misreport  
nor lie, [Pope  
Not to gain paradise: no, nor if the  
Charged him to do it—he is white as  
death.

Peters, how pale you look! you bring  
the smoke

Of Cranmer's burning with you.

Pet. Twice or thrice  
The smoke of Cranmer's burning  
wrapt me round.

*How.* Peters, you know me Catholic, but English. [or leave  
Did he die bravely? Tell me that,  
All else untold.

*Pet.* My Lord, he died most bravely.  
*How.* Then tell me all.

*Paget.* Ay, Master Peters, tell us.

*Pet.* You saw him how he passed  
among the crowd; [friars  
And ever as he walk'd the Spanish  
Still plied him with entreaty and reproach:

[helm  
But Cranmer, as the helmsman at the  
Steers, ever looking to the happy  
haven [his death;

Where he shall rest at night, moved to,  
And I could see that many silent  
hands [own; and thus,

Came from the crowd and met his  
When we had come where Ridley  
burnt with Latimer, [whose mind

He, with a cheerful smile, as one  
Is all made up, in haste put off the  
rags [all in white,

They had mocked his misery with, and  
His long white beard, which he had  
never shaven [to the chain,

Since Henry's death, down-sweeping  
Wherewith they bound him to the  
stake, he stood, [Church,

More like an ancient father of the  
Than heretic of these times; and still  
the friars [his head,

Plied him, but Cranmer only shook  
Or answer'd them in smiling nega-  
tives; [den cry:—

Whereat Lord Williams gave a sud-  
"Make short! make short!" and so  
they lit the wood.

Then Cranmer lifted his left hand to  
heaven,  
And thrust his right into the bitter  
flame; [than once,

And crying, in his deep voice, more  
"This hath offended—this unworthy  
hand!"

So held it till all was burn'd, before  
The flame had reach'd his body; I  
stood near— [of pain:

Mark'd him—he never uttered moan  
He never stirr'd or writhed, but, like  
a statue, [flame,

Unmoving in the greatness of the  
Gave up the ghost; and so past mar-  
tyr-like— [but whither?

Martyr I may not call him—past—  
*Paget.* To purgatory, man, to pur-  
gatory.

*Pet.* Nay, but, my Lord, he denied  
purgatory.

*Paget.* Why then to heaven, and  
God ha' mercy on him.

*How.* Paget, despite his fearful  
heresies, [moan for him;  
I loved the man, and needs must  
O Cranmer!

*Paget.* But your moan is useless  
now:

Come out, my Lord, it is a world of  
fools. [Exeunt.

## ACT. V.

SCENE I.—*London. Hall in the Palace.*

Queen, Sir Nicholas Heath.

*Heath.* Madam, [look'd to:  
I do assure you, that it must be  
Calais is but ill-garrison'd in Guisnes  
Are scarce two hundred men, and the  
French fleet [look'd to,

Rule in the narrow seas. It must be  
If war should fall between yourself  
and France;

Or you will lose your Calais.

*Mary.* It shall be look'd to;  
I wish you a good-morning, good Sir  
Nicholas:

Here is the King. [Exit Heath

Enter Philip.

*Phi.* Sir Nicholas tells you true,  
And you must look to Calais when I  
go. [again—so soon?

*Mary.* Go! must you go, indeed—  
Why, nature's licensed vagabond, the  
swallow,

That might live always in the sun's  
warm heart,

Stays longer here in our poor north  
than you:— [again.

Knows where he nested—ever comes  
*Phi.* And, Madam, so shall I.

*Mary.* O, will you? will you?  
I am faint with fear that you will  
come no more. [me hence.

*Phi.* Ay, ay; but many voices call  
*Mary.* Voices—I hear unhappy ru-  
mors—nay

I say not, I believe. What voices call  
you [est to you?  
Dearer than mine that should be dear—  
Alas, my Lord; what voices and how  
many? [agon,

*Phi.* The voices of Castile and Ar-  
Granada, Naples, Sicily and Milan,—  
The voices of the Franche-Comte and  
the Netherlands.

The voices of Peru and Mexico.  
Tunis, and Oran, and the Phillipines.

And all the fair spice-islands of the  
East.

*Mary* (*admiringly*). You are the  
mightiest monarch upon earth,  
I but a little Queen; and so, indeed,

Need you the more; and wherefore  
could you not [liege,

Helm the huge vessel of your state, my  
Here, by the side of her who loves you  
most? [the sun

*Phi.* No, Madam, no! a candle in  
Is all but smoke—a star beside the  
moon [crown me—

Is all but lost; your people will not  
Your people are as cheerless as your  
clime; [brawls, the gibbets.

Hate me and mine: witness the  
Here swings a Spaniard—there an  
Englishman;

The peoples are unlike as their com-  
plexion;

Yet will I be your swallow and return—

But now I cannot bide.

Mary. Not to help me?

They hate me also for my love to you, My Philip; and these judgments on the land— [plague—

Harvestless autumn, horrible ague.

Phi. The blood and sweat of heretics at the stake

Is God's best dew upon the barren field.

Burn more!

Mary. I will, I will: and you will stay. [came to sue

Phi. Have I not said? Madam, I Your Council and yourself to declare war. [in your ranks

Mary. Sir, there are many English To help your battle.

Phi. So far good. I say.

I came to sue your Council and yourself [France.

To declare war against the King of Mary. Not to see me?

Phi. Ay, Madam, to see you. Unalterably and pesteringly fond!

[Aside.

But, soon or late you must have war with France; [his hearth.

King Henry warms your traitors at Carew is there, and Thomas Stafford Courtenay, belike— [there.

Mary. A fool and featherhead!

Phi. Ay, but they use his name.

In brief, this Henry [the intent Stirs up your land against you to That you may lose your English heritage. [marrying

And then your Scottish namesake The Dauphin, he would weld France, England, Scotland, [me.

Into one sword to hack at Spain and Mary. And yet the Pope is now col-

leagued with France;

You make your wars upon him down in Italy:—

Philip, can that be well?

Phi. Content you, Madam;

You must abide my judgment, and my father's, [war.

Who deems it a most just and holy The Pope would cast the Spaniard out of Naples: [Saracens.

He calls us worse than Jews, Moors, The Pope has pushed his horns beyond his mitre—

Beyond his province. Now, Duke Alva will but touch him on the horns, [head—

And he withdraws; and of his holy For Alva is true son of the true church— [help me here?

No hair is harm'd. Will you not Mary. Alas! the Council will not hear of war. [of England.

They say your wars are not the wars They will not lay more taxes on a land [you know

So hunger-nipt and wretched: and

The crown is poor. We have given the church-lands back:

The nobles would not; nay, they clapt their hands [therefore God

Upon their swords when ask'd; and Is hard upon the people. What's to be done? [again,

Sir, I will move them in your cause And we will raise us loans and subsidies [Thomas Gresham

Among the merchants; and Sir Will aid us. There is Antwerp and the Jews.

Phi. Madam, my thanks. [ing?

Mary. And you will stay your go-

Phi. And further to discourage and lay lame [her not,

The plots of France, altho' you love You must proclaim Elizabeth your heir. [of Scots.

She stands beyond you and the Queen Mary. The Queen of Scots at least is Catholic.

Phi. Ay, Madam, Catholic; but I will not have [and too.

The King of France the King of Eng-

Mary. But she's a heretic, and, when I am gone,

Brings the new learning back.

Phi. It must be done.

You must proclaim Elizabeth your heir

Mary. Then it is done; but you will stay your going [pose?

Somewhat beyond your settled pur-

Phi. No!

Mary. What, not one day?

Phi. You beat upon the rock.

Mary. And I am broken there.

Phi. Is this a place To wait in, Madam? what! a public hall.

Go in, I pray you.

Mary. Do not seem so changed. Say go; but only say it lovingly.

Phi. You do mistake. I am not one to change.

I never loved you more.

Mary. Sire, I obey you, Come quickly.

Phi. Ay. [Exit Mary.

Fer. (aside.) The Queen in tears.

Phi. FERIA!

Hast thou not mark'd—come closer to mine ear— [hath grown

How doubly aged this Queen of ours Since she lost hope of bearing us a child?

Fer. Sire, if your Grace hath mark'd it, so have I.

Phi. Hast thou not likewise mark'd Elizabeth, [deed?

How fair and royal—like a Queen, in-

Fer. Allow me the same answer as before— [so have I.

That if your grace hath mark'd her, Phi. Good, now; methinks my Queen is like enough To leave by and by.

*Fer.* To leave you, sire?

*Phi.* I mean not like to live. Elizabeth—

To Philibert of Savoy, as you know,  
We meant to wed her; but I am not  
sure [Queen

She will not serve me better—so my  
Would leave me—as—my wife.

*Fer.* Sire, even so.

*Phi.* She will not have Prince Philibert of Savoy.

*Fer.* No, sire. [time,

*Phi.* I have to pray you, some odd  
To sound the Princess carelessly on  
this;

Not as from me, but as your fantasy;  
And tell me how she takes it.

*Fer.* Sire, I will.

*Phi.* I am not certain but that  
Philibert [his suit

Shall be the man; and I shall urge  
Upon the Queen, because I am not  
certain:

You understand, *Feria*.

*Fer.* Sire, I do.

*Phi.* And if you be not secret in  
this matter,

You understand me there, too?

*Fer.* Sire, I do.

*Phi.* You must be sweet and supple,  
like a Frenchman.

She is none of those who loathe the  
honeycomb. [Exit *Feria*.

*Enter Renard.*

*Ren.* My liege, I bring you goodly  
tidings.

*Phi.* Well.

*Ren.* There will be war with France,  
at last, my liege; [ass,

Sir Thomas Stafford, a bull-headed  
Sailing from France, with thirty Eng-  
lishmen, [of York;

Hath taken Scarboro' Castle, north  
Proclaims himself protector, and af-  
firms [to reign

The Queen has forfeited her right  
By marriage with an alien—other things  
As idle; a weak Wyatt! Little doubt

This buzz will soon be silenced! but  
the Council [for war.

(I have talk'd with some already) are  
This is the fifth conspiracy hatch'd in

France; [your Grace,

They show their teeth upon it; and  
So you will take advice of mine, should

stay [the event.

Yet for awhile, to shape and guide

*Phi.* Good! Renard, I will stay  
then.

*Ren.* Also, sire,

Might I not say—to please your wife,  
the Queen? [it so.

*Phi.* Ay, Renard, if you care to put  
[Exeunt.

SCENE II.—A Room in the Palace.

Mary and Cardinal Pole.

Lady Clarence and Alice in the back-  
ground.

*Mary.* Reginald Pole, what news  
hath plagued thy heart?

What makes thy favor like the blood-  
less head [the hair?

Fall'n on the block, and held up by  
Philip?—

*Pole.* No, Philip is as warm in life  
As ever.

*Mary.* Ay, and then as cold as ever.  
Is Calais taken?

*Pole.* Cousin, there hath chanced  
A sharper harm to England and to  
Rome.

Than Calais taken. Julius the Third  
Was ever just, and mild, and father-  
like; [Fourth,

But this new Pope Caraffa, Paul the  
Not only reft me of that legateship

Which Julius gave me, and the legate-  
ship

Annex'd to Canterbury—nay, but  
worse—

And yet I must obey the holy father,  
And so must you, good cousin;—worse

than all,  
A pa-sing bell toll'd in a dying ear—

He hath cited me to Rome, for her-  
esy,

Before his Inquisition.

*Mary.* I knew it, cousin,  
But held from you all papers sent by

Rome, [the Pope,

That you might rest among us, till  
To compass which I wrote myself to

Rome, [might not seem  
Reversed his doom, and that you

To disobey his Holiness.

*Pole.* He hates Philip;  
He is all Italian, and he hates the

Spaniard; [war

He cannot dream that I advised the  
He strikes thro' me at Philip and your-  
self. [me too;

Nay, but I know it of old, he hates  
So brands me in the star of Christen-  
dom

A heretic!  
Now, even now, when bow'd before

my time, [out;

The house half-ruin'd ere the lease be  
When I should guide the Church in

peace at home,  
After my twenty years of banishment,

And all my lifelong labor to uphold  
The primacy—a heretic. Long ago,

When I was ruler in the patrimony,  
I was too lenient to the Lutheran,

And I and learned friends among our-  
selves [anisms.

Would freely canvass certain Luther-  
What then, he knew I was no Lu-  
A heretic! [theran.

He drew this shaft against me to the  
head, [chosen Pope,

When it was thought I might be  
But then withdrew it. In full con-  
sistory, [proved me

When I was made Archbishop, he ap-  
And how should he have sent me Le-  
gate hither,

Deeming me heretic? and what heresy since?

But he was evermore mine enemy,  
And hates the Spaniard—fiery-choleric.

[wines.  
A drinker of black, strong, volcanic  
That ever make him fiercer. I, a heretic!  
[ing here-y

Your Highness knows that in pursuit  
I have gone beyond your late Lord  
Chancellor,— [his death.—

He cried enough! enough! before  
Gone beyond him and mine own natural man [me now,

(It was God's cause); so far they call  
The scourge and butcher of their English church.

Mary. Have courage, your reward  
is Heaven itself. [into the fire

Pole. They groan amen; they swarm  
Like flies—for what? no dogma. They  
know nothing.

They burn for nothing.

Mary. You have done your best.

Pole. Have done my best, and as a  
faithful son, [father's work,  
That all day long hath wrought his

When back he comes at evening hath  
the door [loved,

Shut on him by the father whom he  
His early follies cast into his teeth,

And the poor son turn'd out into the  
street [ecusin.

To sleep, to die—I shall die of it,  
Mary. I pray you be not so dis-

consolate; [Pope,  
I still will do my utmost with the  
Poor cousin. [your life

Have I not been the fast friend of  
Since mine began, and it was thought

we two [each other  
Might make one flesh, and cleave unto  
As man and wife.

Pole. Ah, cousin, I remember  
How I would dandle you upon my

knee [once  
At lisping-age. I watch'd you dancing  
With your huge father; he look'd the

Great Harry, [did it,  
You but his cockboat; prettily you  
And innocently. No—we were not

made [here;  
One flesh in happiness, no happiness  
But now we are made one flesh in

misery; [appointment,  
Our bridemaids are not lovely—Dis-

ingratitude, Injustice, Evil-tongue,  
Labor-in-vain.

Mary. Surely, not all in vain.

Peace, cousin, peace! I am sad at  
heart myself.

Pole. Our altar is a mound of dead  
men's clay,

Dug from the grave that yawns for us  
beyond; [the Groom,

And there is one Death stands behind  
And there is one Death stands be-

hind the Bride—  
Mary. Have you been looking at the

"Dance of Death?"

Pole. No; but these libellous pa-  
pers which I found

Strewn in your palace. Look you here  
—the Pope [tic,

Pointing at me with "Pole, the here-  
Thou hast burnt others, do thou burn

thyself, [see!—  
Or I will burn thee," and this other;  
"We pray continually for the death

Of our accursed Queen and Cardinal  
Pole."

This last—I dare not read it her.

Mary. [Aside.  
Away!

Why do you bring me these?  
I thought you knew me better. I never

read, [my dreams.  
I tear them: they come back upon  
The hands that write them should be

burnt clean off [utter them  
As Cranmer's, and the fiends that  
Tongue-torn with pincers, lash'd to

death, or lie [ish'd rats  
Famishing in black cells, while fam-  
Eat them alive. Why do they bring

me these?  
Do you mean to drive me mad?

Pole. I had forgotten  
How these poor libels trouble you.

Your pardon, [ble world,  
Sweet cousin, and farewell! "O bub-

Whose colors in a moment break and  
fly!" [true enough!

Why, who said that? I know not—  
[Puts up the papers, all but the last,

which falls.

[Exit Pole.  
Alice. If Cranmer's spirit were a  
mocking one [sport for him.

And heard these two, there might be  
[Aside.

Mary. Clarence, they hate me;  
even while I speak

There lurks a silent dagger, listening  
In some dark closet, some long gallery,

drawn,  
And panting for my blood as I go by.

Lady C. Nay, Madam, there be  
loyal papers too,

And I have often found them.

Mary. Find me one!  
Lady C. Ay, Madam; but Sir Nich-

olas Heath, the Chancellor,  
Would see your Highness.

Mary. Wherefore should I see him?  
Lady C. Well, Madam, he may bring,

you news from Philip.  
Mary. So, Clarence.

Lady C. Let me first put up your  
It tumbles all abroad. [hair;

Mary. And the gray dawn  
Of an old age that never will be mine

Is all the clearer seen. No, no; what  
matters?

Forlorn I am, and let me look forlorn.  
Enter Sir Nicholas Heath.

Heath. I bring your Majesty such  
grievous news

I grieve to bring it. Madam, Calais is  
taken.

*Mary.* What traitor spoke? Here,  
let my cousin Pole [ran,  
Seize him and burn him for a Luth-  
*Heath.* Her Highness is unwell. I  
will retire.

*Lady C.* Madam, your chancellor,  
Sir Nicholas *Heath*.

*Mary.* Sir Nicholas? I am stunn'd  
—Nicholas *Heath*? [the head.  
Methought some traitor smote me on  
What said you, my good Lord, that our  
brave English [back  
Had sallied out from Calais and driven  
The Frenchman from their trenches?  
*Heath.* Alas! no.

That gateway to the mainland over  
which [years  
Our flag hath floated for two hundred  
Is France again.

*Mary.* So; but it is not lost—  
Not yet. Send out: let England as of  
old [into  
Rise lionlike, strike hard and deep  
The prey they are rending from her  
—ay, and rend [and make

The renders too. Send out, send out,  
Musters in all the counties; gather all  
From sixteen years to sixty; collect  
the fleet; [g

Let every craft that carries sail and  
Steer towards Calais. Guisnes is not  
taken yet?

*Heath.* Guisnes is not taken yet.

*Mary.* There yet is hope.

*Heath.* Ah, Madam, but your people  
are so cold; [care.  
I do much fear that England will not  
Methinks there is no manhood left  
among us.

*Mary.* Send out; I am too weak to  
stir abroad: [Parliament:  
Tell my mind to the Council—to the  
Proclaim it to the winds. Thou art  
cold thyself [I would  
To baffle of their coldness. O would  
My father for an hour! Away now—  
quick! [Exit *Heath*.

I hoped I had served God with all my  
might!

It seems I have not. Ah! much heresy  
Shelter'd in Calais. Saints, I have re-  
built [ages;

Your shrines, set up your broken im-  
be comfortable to me. Suffer not  
That my brief reign in England be de-  
famed [after

Thro' all her angry chronicles here-  
By loss of Calais. Grant me Calais.  
Philip, [Father

We have made war upon the Holy  
All for your sake: what good could  
come of that?

*Lady C.* No, Madam, not against  
the Holy Father;  
You did but help King Philip's war  
with France,

Your troops were never down in Italy.  
*Mary.* I am a byword. Heretic and  
rebel [gone!

Point at me and make merry, Philip

And Calais gone! Time that I were  
gone too! [a voice

*Lady C.* Nay, if the fetid gutter had  
And cried I was not clean, what should  
I care?

Or you, for heretic cries! And I be-  
lieve, [las,

Spite of your melancholy, Sir Nicho-  
Your England is as loyal as myself.

*Mary* (seeing the paper dropt by Pole).

There, there! another paper! Said  
you not [ty

Many of these were loyal? Shall I  
If this be one of such?

*Lady C.* Let it be, let it be.  
God pardon me! I have never yet

found one. [Aside.

*Mary* (reads). "Your people hate you  
as your husband hates you."

Clarence, Clarence, what have I done?  
what sin [Mother of God,

Beyond all grace, all pardon?  
Thou knowest never woman meant so

well, [world.

And fared so ill in this disastrous  
My people hate me and desire my

*Lady C.* No, Madam, no. [death.

*Mary.* My husband hates me, and  
desires my death [bels.

*Lady C.* No Madam; these are li-  
*Mary.* I hate myself, and I desire

my death. [Shall Alice sing you

*Lady C.* Long live your Majesty!  
One of her pleasant songs? Alice, my

child, [say the gloom of Saul  
Bring us your lute (Alice goes). They

Was lighten'd by young David's harp.

*Mary.* Too young!

And never knew a Philip (re-enter  
Alice). Give me the lute.

He hates me!

*She sings.*

Hapless doom of woman happy in be-  
trothing!

Beauty passes like a breath and love is  
lost in loathing:

Low, my lute; speak low, my lute, but  
say the world is nothing—

*Low, lute, low!*

Love will hover round the flowers when  
they first awaken;

Love will fly the fallen leaf, and not  
be overtaken;

Low, my lute! oh low, my lute! we fade  
and are forsaken—

*Low, dear lute, low!*

Take it away! not low enough for me!  
*Alice.* Your Grace hath a low voice.

*Mary.* How dare you say it?  
Even for that he hates me. A low voice

Lost in a wilderness where none can  
hear! [sea!

A voice of shipwreck on a shoreless  
A low voice from the dust and from the

grave. (sitting on the ground).

There, am I low enough now?

*Alice.* Good Lord, how grim and  
ghastly looks her Grace,

With both her knees drawn upward to her chin.

There was an old-world tomb beside my father's,

And this was open'd, and the dead were found [a corpse.

Sitting, and in this fashion; she looks  
*Enter Lady Magdalen Dacres.*

*Lady M.* Madam, the Count de FERIA waits without.

In hopes to see your Highness.

*Lady C. (pointing to Mary.)* Wait he must— [nor hears,

Her trance again. She neither sees And may not speak for hours.

*Lady M.* Unhappiest Of Queens and wives and women.

*Alice (in the foreground with Lady Magdalen).* And all along

Of Philip.

*Lady M.* Not so loud! Our Clarence there [Queen,

Sees ever such an aureole round the It gilds the greatest wronger of her peace,

Who stands the nearest to her.

*Alice.* Ay, this Philip; I used to love the Queen with all my heart— [less

God help me, but methinks I love her For such a dotage upon such a man.

I would I were as tall and strong as you. [to be so tall.

*Lady M.* I seem half-shamed at times

*Alice.* You are the stateliest deer in all the herd— [scandalous,

Beyond his aim—but I am small and And love to hear bad tales of Philip.

*Lady M.* Why? I never heard him utter worse of you Than that you were low-statured.

*Alice.* Does he think Low stature is low nature, or all women's

Low as his own? [nail.

*Lady M.* There you strike the This coarseness is a want of fantasy.

It is the low man thinks the woman low;

Sin is too dull to see beyond himself.

*Alice.* Ah, Magdalen, sin is bold as How dared he? [well as dull.

*Lady M.* Stupid soldiers oft are bold. [eral sees,

Poor lads, they see not what the gen- A risk of utter ruin. I am not

Beyond his aim, or was not.

*Alice.* Who? Not you? Tell, tell me: save my credit with myself. [bird in the eaves,

*Lady M.* I never breathed it to a Would not for all the stars and maiden moon

Our drooping queen should know! In Hampton Court

My window look'd upon the corridor; And I was robing;—this poor throat

Of mine, Barer than I should wish a man to see it,—

When he we speak of drove the win- dow back, [hand;

And, like a thief, push'd in his royal But by God's providence a good

stout staff Lay near me; and you know me

strong of arm; I do believe I lamed his Majesty's

For a day or two, tho', give the Devil his due,

I never found he bore me any spite.

*Alice.* I would she could have wed- ded that poor youth,

My Lord of Devon—light enough, God knows, [the boy

And mixt with Wyatt's rising—and Not out of him—but neither cold,

coarse, cruel, And more than all—no Spaniard.

*Lady C.* Not so loud. Lord Devon, girls! what are you whis- pering here?

*Alice.* Probing an old state secret— how it chanced [foreign travel,

That this young Earl was sent on Not lost his head. [him.

*Lady C.* There was no proof against

*Alice.* Nay, Madam, did not Gar- diner intercept [wrote,

A letter which the Count de Noailles To that dead traitor, Wyatt, with full

proof [came of that? Of Courtenay's treason? What, le-

*Lady C.* Some say that Gardiner, out of love for him, [lost

Burnt it, and some relate that it was When Wyatt sack'd the Chancellor's

house in Southwark. Let dead things rest.

*Alice.* Ay, and with him who died Alone in Italy.

*Lady C.* Much changed, I hear, [on. Had put off levity and put graveness

The foreign courts report him in his manner [shield.

Noble as his young person and old It might be so—but all is over now;

He caught a chill in the lagoons of And died in Padua. [Venice,

*Mary (looking up suddenly).* Died in the true faith?

*Lady C.* Ay, Madam, happily.

*Mary.* Happier he than I.

*Lady M.* It seems her Highness hath awaken'd. Think you

That I might dare to tell her that the Count— [evermore.

*Mary.* I will see no man hence for Saving my confessor and my cousin

Pole. [dear lady.

*Lady M.* It is the Count de FERIA, my

*Mary.* What Count?

*Lady M.* The Count de FERIA, from his Majesty

King Philip. [hair!

*Mary.* Philip! quick! loop up my Throw cushions on that seat, and make it throne-like.

Arrange my dress—the gorgeous In- dian shawl

That Philip brought me in our happy days!—

That covers all. So—am I somewhat Queenlike. [earth?

Bride of the mightiest sovereign upon Lady C. Ay, so your Grace would bide a moment yet.

Mary. No, no, he brings a letter. I may die

Before I read it. Let me see him at once.

Enter Count de Feria (kneels).

Fer. I trust your Grace is well. (aside) How her hand burns.

Mary. I am not well, but it will better me, [bring.

Sir Count, to read the letter which you

Fer. Madam, I bring no letter.

Mary. How! no letter?

Fer. His Highness is so vex'd with strange affairs—

Mary. That his own wife is no affair of his. [veriest love,

Fer. Nay, Madam, nay! he sends his And says he will come quickly.

Mary. Doth he, indeed? You, sir, do you remember what you said

When last you came to England?

Fer. Madam, I brought My King's congratulations; it was hoped [happy state

Your Highness was once more in To give him an heir male.

Mary. Sir, you said more: You said he would come quickly. I had horses [night;

On all the road from Dover, day and On all the road from Harwich, night and day; [land came not;

But the child came not, and the husband yet he will come quickly . . . . .

Thou hast learnt [need Thy lesson and I mine. There is no

For Philip so to shame himself again. Return, [more,

And tell him that I know he comes no Tell him at last I know his love is dead, [death—

And that I am in state to bring forth Thou art commission'd to Elizabeth, And not to me!

Fer. Mere compliments and wishes. [your Grace?

But shall I take some message from Mary. Tell her to come and close my

dying eyes, [my grave. And wear my crown, and dance upon

Fer. Then I may say your Grace will see your sister?

Your Grace is too low-spirited. Air and sunshine. [warm Spain.

I would we had you, Madam, in our You droop in your dim London.

Mary. Have him away, I sickened of his readiness.

Lady C. My Lord Count, Her Highness is too ill for colloquy.

Fer. (kneels and kisses her hand). I wish her Highness better. (Aside)

How her hand burns. [Exeunt.

### SCENE III.—A House near London.

Elizabeth, Steward of the Household, Attendants.

Eliz. There's half an angel wrong'd in your account; Methinks I am all angel that I bear it Without more ruffling. Cast it o'er again.

Steward. I were whole devil if I wrong'd you, Madam.

[Exit Steward.

At. The Count de Feria, from the King of Spain. [need not go:

Eliz. Ah!—let him enter. Nay, you [To her Ladies.

Remain within the chamber, but apart. [Welcome to England!

We'll have no private conference.

Enter Feria.

Fer. Fair island star. [Count?

Eliz. I shine! what else, Sir

Fer. As far as France, and into Philip's heart. [served,

My King would know if you be fairly And lodged, and treated.

Eliz. You see the lodging, sir, I am well served, and am in every thing [Queen.

Most loyal and most grateful to the Fer. You should be grateful to my

master, too, [owe He spoke of this; and unto him you

That Mary hath acknowledged you her heir. [the people.

Eliz. No, not to her or him; but to Who know my right, and love me as I

The people! whom God aid! [love Fer. You will be Queen,

And were I Philip—

Eliz. Wherefore pause you—what?

Fer. Nay, I but speak from mine own self, not him:

Your royal sister cannot last; your hand [cate one!

Will be much coveted! What a deli- Our Spanish ladies have none such—

and there, [samer gold— Were you in Spain, this fine fair gos-

like sun-gilt breadings on a frosty dawn—

That hovers round your shoulder—

Eliz. Is it so fine?

Troth, some have said so.

Fer. Would be deemed a miracle.

Eliz. Your Philip hath gold hair and golden beard, [like mine.

There must be ladies many with hair Fer. Some few of Gothic blood have

golden hair, But none like yours.

Eliz. I am happy you approve it.

Fer. But as to Philip and your Grace—consider,—

If such a one as you should match with Spain, What hinders but that Spain and Eng-

land join'd,

Should make the mightiest empire  
earth has known.

Spain would be England on her seas,  
and England

Mistress of the Indies.

*Eliz.* It may chance, that England  
Will be mistress of the Indies yet,  
Without the help of Spain.

*Fer.* Impossible;  
Except you put Spain down.

Wide of the mark ev'n for a madman's  
dream. [men. Count de Feria,

*Eliz.* Perhaps; but we have sea-  
I take it that the King hath spoken to  
you; [match?

But is Don Carlos such a goodly  
*Fer.* Don Carlos, madam, is but  
twelve years old.

*Eliz.* Ay, tell the King that I will  
muse upon it; [keep him so;

He is my good friend, and I would  
But—he would have me Catholic of  
Rome,

And that I scarce can be; and, sir,  
till now [marriages,

My sister's marriage, and my father's  
Make me full fain to live and die a  
maid. [King.

But I am much beholden to your  
I have you aught else to tell me?

*Fer.* Nothing, Madam,  
Save that methought I gather'd from  
the Queen [fore she—died.

That she would see your Grace be-  
*Eliz.* God's death! and wherefore  
spake you not before?

We dally with our lazy moments here,  
And hers are number'd. Horses there,  
without! [master.

I am much beholden to the King, your  
Why did you keep me prating. Horses,  
there! [*Exit Elizabeth, etc.*

*Fer.* So from a clear sky falls the  
thunderbolt! [Philip,

Don Carlos? Madam, if you marry  
Then I and he will snaffle your "God's  
death," [you tame;

And break your paces in, and make  
God's death, forsooth—you do not  
know King Philip. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*London. Before the Pal-  
ace.*

*A light burning within. Voices of the  
night passing.*

1. Is not you light in the Queen's  
chamber?

2. Ay,  
They say she's dying.

1. So is Cardinal Pole.  
May the great angels join their wings,  
and make

Down for their heads to heaven!

2. Amen. Come on.  
[*Exeunt.*

Two Others.

1. There's the Queen's light. I hear  
she cannot live.

2. God curse her and her Legate!  
Gardiner burns

Already: but to pay them full in kind,  
The hottest hold in all the devil's den

[Guernsey,  
Were but a sort of winter; sir, in  
I watch'd a woman burn; and in her

agon [was born—  
The mother came upon her—a child

And, sir, they hurl'd it back into the  
fire, [babe

That, being but baptized in fire, th  
Might be in fire forever. Ah, good

neighbor, [than fire  
There should be something fierier  
To yield them their deserts.

1. Amen to all  
You wish, and further.

*Ad. Voice.* Deserts! Amen to what?  
Whose deserts? Yours? You have a

gold ring on your finger, and soft  
raiment about your body; and is not

the woman up yonder sleeping after  
all she has done, in peace and quiet-

ness, on a soft bed, in a closed room,  
with light, fire, physic, tendance; and

I have seen the true men of Christ  
lying famine-dead by scores, and under

no ceiling but the cloud that wept on  
them, not for them.

1. Friend, tho' so late, it is not safe  
to preach. [you?

You had best go home. What are  
3. What am I? One who cries con-

tinually with sweat and tears to the  
Lord God that it would please Him

out of His infinite love to break down  
all kingship and queenship, all priest-

hood and prelacy; to cancel and abol-  
ish all bonds of human allegiance, all

the magistracy, all the nobles, and all  
the wealthy; and to send us again,

according to his promise, the one King,  
the Christ, and all things in common,

as in the day of the first church, when  
Christ Jesus was King.

1. If ever I heard a madman,—let's  
away! [beyond me.

Why, you long-winded— Sir, you go  
I pride myself on being moderate.

Good night! Go home. Besides, you  
curse so loud,

The watch will hear you. Get you  
home at once. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*London. A Room in the  
Palace.*

*Gallery on one side. The moon-  
light streaming through a range of  
windows on the wall opposite.*  
Mary, Lady Clarence, Lady Mag-  
dalen Daeres, Alice, Queen *pacing*  
the Gallery. *A writing-table in*  
*front. Queen comes to the table and*  
*writes and goes again, pacing the*  
*Gallery.*

*Lady C.* Mine eyes are dim: what  
hath she written? read. [to me.]

*Alice.* "I am dying, Philip; come

*Lady M.* There—up and down, poor lady, up and down.

*Alice.* And how her shadow crosses one by one [on the wall, The moonlight casements pattern'd Following her like her sorrow. She turns again.

[*Queen sits and writes and goes again.*

*Lady C.* What hath she written now? [come," and all awry,

*Alice.* Nothing; but "come, come, And blotted by her tears. This cannot last. [*Queen returns.*

*Mary.* I whistle to the bird has broken cage, And all in vain. [*Sitting down.*

Calais gone—Guineses gone, too—and Philip gone!

*Lady C.* Dear Madam, Philip is but at the wars; [again;

I cannot doubt but that he comes And he is with you in a measure still. I never look'd upon so fair a likeness As your great King in armor there, Upon his helmet. [his hand

[*Pointing to the portrait of Philip on the wall.*

*Mary.* Doth he not look noble? I had heard of him in battle over seas, And I would have my warrior all in arms.

He said it was not courtly to stand helmeted [cious moment, Before the Queen. He had his gra- Altho' you'll not believe me. How As if he loved me yet! [he smiles

*Lady C.* And so he does.

*Mary.* He never loved me—nay, he could not love me. [France. It was his father's policy against I am eleven years older than he, Poor boy. [*Weeps.*

*Alice.* That was a lusty boy of twenty-seven; [*Aside*

Poor enough in God's grace!

*Mary.* --And all in vain!

The Queen of Scots is married to the Dauphin, [world is gone; And Charles, the lord of this low And all his wars and wisdoms past away;

And in a moment I shall follow him.

*Lady C.* Nay, dearest Lady, see your good physician.

*Mary.* Drugs—but he knows they cannot help me—says [think— That rest is all—tells me I must not That I must rest—I shall rest by and by. [when he springs

Catch the wild cat, cage him, and And maim himself against the bars, say "rest:" [have him rest—

Why, you must kill him if you would Dead or alive you cannot make him happy. [pure a life,

*Lady C.* Your Majesty has lived so And done such mighty things by Holy Church, [yet.

I trust that God will make you happy

*Mary.* What is the strange thing happiness? Sit down here; Tell me thine happiest hour.

*Lady C.* I will, if that May make your Grace forget yourself a little. [our field

There runs a shallow brook across For twenty miles, where the black crow flies five, [the way

And doth so bound and babble all As if itself were happy. It was May-time, [loved.

And I was walking with the man I I loved him, but I thought I was not loved. [brook

And both were silent, letting the wild Speak for us—till he stoop'd and gather'd one [nots,

From out a bed of thick forget-me- Look'd hard and sweet at me, and gave it me,

I took it, tho' I did not know I took it, And put it in my bosom, and all at once I felt his arms about me, and his lips—

*Mary.* O God! I have been too slack, too slack;

There are Hot Gospellers even among our guards— [but burnt Nobles we dared not touch. We have The heretic priest, workmen, and women and children.

Wet, famine, ague, fever, storm, wreck, wrath,— [God's grace,

We have so play'd the coward; but by We'll follow Philip's leading, and set up The Holy Office here—garner the wheat, And burn the tares with unquenchable fire!

Burn!—

Fie, what a savor! tell the cooks to close The doors of all the offices below.

Latimer! [here—

Sir, we are private with our women Ever a rough, blunt, and uncourtly fellow— [out!

Thou light a torch that never will go 'Tis out—mine flames. Women, the Holy Father [in Pole—

Has ta'en the legateship from our cousin— Was that well done? and poor Pole pines of it.

As I do, to the death. I am but a woman, I have no power.—Ah, weak and meek old man.

Sevenfold dishonor'd even in the sight Of thine own secretaries—No, no. No pardon!— [hand still

Why that was false: there is the right Beckons me hence.

Sir, you were burnt for heresy, not for treason,

Remember that! 'twas I and Bonner did it,

And Pole; we are three to one—Have you found mercy there,

Grant it me here: and see he smiles and goes, Gentle as in life.

*Alice.* Madam, who goes? King Philip?

*Mary.* No, Philip comes and goes,  
but never goes.

Women, when I am dead,  
Open my heart, and there you will find  
written [his,—

Two names, Philip and Calais; open  
So that he have one,— [icy,—

You will find Philip only, policy, pol-  
Ay, worse than that—not one hour true  
to me! [vice!

Foul maggots crawling in a fester'd  
Adulterous to the very heart of Hell.

Hast thou a knife? [God's mercy—  
*Alice.* Ay, Madam, but o'

*Mary.* Fool, think'st thou I would  
peril mine own soul [girl,

By slaughter of the body? I could not,  
Not this way—callous with a constant  
strife,

Unwoundable. Thy knife!  
*Alice.* Take heed, take heed!

The blade is keen as death.  
*Mary.* This Philip shall not

Stare in upon me in my haggardness;  
Old, miserable, diseased, [down,

Incapable of children. Come thou  
[Cuts out the picture and throws it  
down. [my Philip.

Lie there. (*Wails.*) O God, I have killed  
*Alice.* No [out,

Madam, you have but cut the canvas  
We can replace it.

*Mary.* All is well then; rest—  
I will to rest; he said, I must have rest.

[Cries of "Elizabeth" in the street.  
A cry! What's that? Elizabeth? re-

volt? [Wyatt?  
A new Northumberland, another

I'll fight it on the threshold of the  
grave. [comes to see you.

*Lady C.* Madam, your royal sister  
*Mary.* I will not see her.

Who knows if Boleyn's daughter be my  
sister? [arm.

I will see none except the priest. Your  
[To Lady Clarence.

O Saint of Aragon, with that sweet  
worn smile [hence.

Among thy patient wrinkles—help me  
[Exeunt.

*The Priest passes. Enter Elizabeth  
and Sir William Cecil.*

*Eliz.* Good counsel yours—  
No one in waiting? still,

As if the chamberlain were Death him-  
self! [way?

The room she sleeps in—is not this the  
No, that way there are voices. Am I

too late? [way.  
*Cecil* . . . God guide me lest I lose the

[*Exit Elizabeth.*  
*Cecil.* Many points weather'd, many

perilous ones,  
At last a harbor opens; but therein

Sunk rocks—they need fine steering—  
much it is

To be nor mad, nor bigot—have a mind—  
Not let Priests' talk, or dream of worlds

to be,

Miscorol things about her—sudden  
touches

For him, or him—sunk rocks; no pas-  
sionate faith— [mise;

But—if let be—balance and compro-  
Brave, wary, same to the heart of hei

—a Tudor [Boleyn, too,  
School'd by the shadow of death—a

Glancing across the Tudor—not so well  
*Enter Alice.*

How is the good Queen now?  
*Alice.* Away from Philip.

Back in her childhood—prattling to  
her mother [Charles,

Of her betrothal to the Emperor  
And childlike-jealous of him again—

and once [book  
She thank'd her father sweetly for his

Against that godless German. Ah, those  
days

Were happy. It was never merry world  
In England, since the Bible came

among us.  
*Cecil.* And who says that?

*Alice.* It is a saying among the Cath-  
olics.

*Cecil.* It never will be merry world  
in England, [poor,

Till all men have their Bible, rich and  
*Alice.* The Queen is dying, or you

dare not say it.  
*Enter Elizabeth.*

*Eliz.* The Queen is dead.  
*Cecil.* Then here she stands!

my homage.  
*Eliz.* She knew me, and acknowl-

edged me her heir,  
Pray'd me to pay her debts, and keep

the Faith; [in peace.  
Then clasp the cross, and pass'd away

I left her lying still and beautiful,  
More beautiful than in life. Why

should you vex yourself,  
Poor sister? Sir, I swear I have no

heart [fence,  
To be your Queen. To reign is restless

Tierce, quart, and trickery. Peace is  
with the dead. [mpt:

Her life was winter, for her spring was  
And she loved much: pray God she be

forgiven.  
*Cecil.* Peace with the dead who

never were at peace!  
Yet she loved one so much—I needs

must say—  
That never English monarch dying left

England so little.  
*Eliz.* But with Cecil's aid

And others, if our person be secured  
From traitor stabs—we will make Eng-

land great.  
*Enter Paget, and other Lords of the*

*Council, Sir Ralph Bagenhall, etc.*  
*Lords.* God save Elizabeth, the

Queen of England!  
*Bag.* God save the Crown: the Pa-

pacy is no more.  
*Paget (aside).* Are we so sure of that?

*Acclamation.* God save the Queen!

# HAROLD.

SHOW-DAY AT BATTLE ABBEY. 1876.

A GARDEN here—May breath and bloom  
of spring—  
The cuckoo yonder from an English elm  
Crying “with my false egg I overwhelm  
The native nest:” and fancy hears the  
ring [sing,  
Of harness, and that deathful arrow  
And Saxon battle-axe clang on Norman  
helm. [realm:  
Here rose the dragon-banner of our

Here fought, here fell, our Norman  
slander’d king.  
O Garden blossoming out of English  
blood!  
O strange hate-healer Time! We stroll  
and stare [years ago;  
Where might made right eight hundred  
Might, right? ay good, so all things  
make for good—  
But he and he, if soul be soul, are where  
Each stands full face with all he did  
below.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

King Edward the Confessor.  
Stigand, created Archbishop of Can-  
terbury by the Anti-pope Benedict.  
Aldred, Archbishop of York.  
The Norman Bishop of London.  
Harold, Earl of Wessex, af-  
terwards King of Eng-  
land, [bria,  
Tostig, Earl of Northum-  
burgh, Earl of East Anglia,  
Leofwin, Earl of Kent and  
Essex, } Sons of  
Wulfnoth. } Godwin.  
Count William of Normandy.  
William Rufus.  
William Malet, a Norman Noble.\*

Edwin, Earl of Mercia, } Sons of Alfgar  
Morcar, Earl of North- } of Mercia.  
umbria after Tostig, }  
Gamel, a Northumbrian Thane.  
Guy, Count of Ponthieu.  
Rolf, a Ponthieu Fisherman.  
Hugh Margot, a Norman Monk.  
Osgod and Athelric, Canons from Wal-  
tham.  
The Queen, Edward the Confessor’s  
Wife, Daughter of Godwin.  
Aldwyth, Daughter of Alfgar and  
Widow of Griffyth, King of Wales.  
Edith, Ward of King Edward.  
Courtiers, Earls and Thanes, Men-at-  
Arms, Canons of Waltham, Fisher-  
men, &c.

\*... quidam partim Normannus et Anglus  
Computer Herald. (*Guy of Amiens*, 587.)

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—London. *The King’s Palace.*  
(*A comet seen through the open win-  
dow.*) Aldwyth, Gamel, Courtiers  
talking together.

First Courtier. Lo! there once more  
—this is the seventh night! [scourge  
You grimly-glaring, treble-brandished  
Of England!

Second Courtier. Horrible!

1 Court. Look you, there’s a star  
That dances in it as mad with agony!

Third Courtier. Ay, like a spirit in  
Hell who skips and flies  
To right and left, and cannot scape the  
flame.

2 Court. Steam’d upward from the  
undescendable  
Abysm.

1 Court. Or floated downward from  
the throne  
Of God Almighty.

Aldwyth. Gamel, son of Orm,  
What thinkest thou this means?

Gamel. War, my dear lady!

Ald. Doth this affright thee?

Gamel. Mightily, my dear lady.

Ald. Stand by me then, and look  
upon my face,  
Not on the comet.

Enter Morcar.

Brother! why so pale?

Morcar. It glares in heaven, it flares  
upon the Thames.  
The people are as thick as bees below,  
They hum like bees,—they cannot  
speak—for awe; [strike  
Look to the skies, then to the river,

Their hearts, and hold their babies up to it. [too, I think that they would Molochize them To have the heavens clear.

*Alld.* They fright not me.

*Enter* Leofwin, *after him* Gurth.

Ask thou Lord Leofwin what he thinks of this! [lieve, that these

*Mor.* Lord Leofwin, dost thou be- Three rods of blood-red fire up yonder mean [Heaven?

The doom of England and the wrath of *Bishop of London (passing).* Did ye not cast with bestial violence [all Our holy Norman bishops down from Their thrones in England? I alone remain.

Why should not Heaven be wroth?

*Leofwin.* With us or thee?

*Bp. of Lond.* Did ye not outlaw your archbishop Robert,

Robert of Jumiéges—well nigh murder him too? [Heaven?

Is there no reason for the wrath of *Leof.* Why then the wrath of Hea-

ven hath three tails, [London. The devil only one. [*Exit Bishop of*

*Enter* Archbishop Stigand.

Ask our Archbishop.

Stigand should know the purposes of Heaven. [face of heaven,

*Stigand.* Not I. I cannot read the Perhaps our vines will grow the better for it. [the king's face on his coins.

*Leof. (laughing.)* He can but read

*Stig.* Ay, ay, young lord, there the king's face is power. [lie fear,

*Gurth.* O father mock not at a pub- But tell us, is this pendent hell in hea- ven

A harm to England?

*Stig.* Ask it of King Edward!

And he may tell thee, I am a harm to England.

Old uncanonical Stigand—ask of me

Who had my pallium from an Anti- pope? [world

Not he the man—for in our windy What's up is faith, what's down is heresy. [shake his chair.

Our friends, the Normans, help to I have a Norman fever on me, son, And cannot answer sanely . . . What it means?

Ask our broad Earl. [*Pointing to Har- old, who enters.*

*Harold seeing Gamel.* Hail, Gamel, son of Orm! [Gamel,

Albeit no rolling stone, my good friend Thou hast rounded since we met. Thy life at home [not

Is easier than mine here. Look! am I Work-wan, flesh-fallen!

*Gamel.* Art thou sick, good Earl?

*Har.* Sick as an autumn swallow for a voyage, [hound

Sick for an idle week of hawk and Beyond the seas—a change! When camest thou hither?

*Gamel.* To-day, good Earl.

*Har.* Is the North quiet, Gamel?

*Gamel.* Nay, there be murmurs, for thy brother breaks us

With over-taxing—quiet, ay, as yet— Nothing as yet.

*Har.* Stand by him, mine old friend, Thou art a great voice in Northumber- land! [hear thee.

Advise him: speak him sweetly, he will He is passionate but honest. Stand thou by him! [weird sign

More talk of this to-morrow, if you Not blast us in our dreams.—Well, father Stigand—

To Stigand, *who advances to him.*

*Stigand (pointing to the comet).* War here, my son? is that the doom of England?

*Har.* Why not the doom of all the world as well? [land.

For all the world sees it as well as Eng- These meteors came and went before our day, [more

Not harming any; it threatens us no Than French or Norman. War? the worst that follows [mon rut

Things that seem jerk'd out of the com- Of Nature is the hot religious fool, Who, seeing war in heaven, for hea- ven's credit

Makes it on earth: but look where Ed- ward draws

A faint foot hither, leaning upon Tostig.

He hath learnt to love our Tostig much of late. [tiger in him,

*Leof.* And he hath learnt, despite the To sleek and supple himself to the king's hand. [cures the evil

*Gurth.* I trust the kingly touch that May serve to charm the tiger out of him.

*Leof.* He hath as much of cat as tiger in him. [man.

Our Tostig loves the hand and not the

*Har.* Nay! Better die than lie!

*Enter* King, Queen and Tostig.

*Edw.* In heaven signs! Signs upon earth! signs everywhere!

your Priests

Gross, worldly, simoniacal, unlearned! They scarce can read their Psalter;

and your churches [manland Uncouth, unhandsome, while in Nor-

God speaks thro' abler voices, as He dwells [being

In statelier shrines. I say not this, as Half Norman-blooded, nor as some

have held,

Because I love the Norman better—no, But dreading God's revenge upon this

realm [say it

For narrowness and coldness: and I For the last time perchance, before I go

To find the sweet refreshment of the Saints.

I have lived a life of utter purity: I have builded the great church of

Holy Peter:

I have wrought miracles—to God the glory—

And miracles will in my name be wrought [go—

Hereafter.—I have fought the fight and I see the flashing of the gates of pearl—And it is well with me, tho' some of you Have scorn'd me—ay—but after I am gone [vision;

Woe, woe to England! I have had a The seven sleepers in the cave at Ephesus

Have turn'd from right to left.

*Har.* My most dear Master, What matters? let them turn from left to right

And sleep again.

*Tostig.* Too hardy with thy king!

A life of prayer and fasting well may see

Deeper into the mysteries of heaven Than thou, good brother.

*Ald.* (*aside*). Sees he into thine, That thou wouldst have his promise for the crown? [art too hard,

*Edw.* Tostig says true; my son, thou Not stagger'd by this ominous earth and heaven: [same loom,

But heaven and earth are threads of the Play into one another, and weave the web

That may confound thee yet.

*Har.* Nay, I trust not. For I have served thee long and honestly.

*Edw.* I know it, son; I am not thankful: thou [me

Hast broken all my foes, lighten'd for The weight of this poor crown, and left me time [one.

And peace for prayer to gain a better Twelve years of service! England loves thee for it.

Thou art the man to rule her!

*Ald.* (*aside*). So, not Tostig!

*Har.* And after those twelve years a boon, my king,

Respite, a holiday; thyself wast wont To love the chase: thy leave to set my feet [the seas!

On board, and hunt and hawk'd beyond

*Edw.* What, with this naming horror

overhead?

*Har.* Well, when it passes then.

*Edw.* Ay if it pass. Go not to Normandy—go not to Normandy. [to Normandy?

*Har.* And wherefore not, my king, Is not my brother Wulfnoth hostage there

For my dead father's loyalty to thee?

I pray thee, let me hence and bring him home. [messenger.

*Edw.* Not thee, my son; some other

*Har.* And why not me, my lord, to Normandy? [and mine?

Is not the Norman Count thy friend

*Edw.* I pray thee, do not go to Normandy. [Normans out

*Har.* Because my father drove the

Of England?—That was many a summer gone— [thee.

Forgotten and forgiven by them and *Edw.* Harold, I will not yield thee leave to go. [hawk and hunt

*Har.* Why then to Flanders. I will In Flanders. [fields

*Edw.* Be there not fair woods and In England? Wilful, wilful. Go—the Saints

Pilot and prosper all thy wandering out And homeward. Tostig, I am faint again.

Son Harold, I will in and pray for thee.

[*Exit, leaning on Tostig, and followed by Stigand, Morcar, and Courtiers.*

*Har.* What lies upon the mind of our good king [mandy?

That he should harp this way on Nor-Queen. Brother, the king is wiser than he seems; [king.

And Tostig knows it; Tostig loves the

*Har.* And love should know; and—be the king so wise,— [seems.

Then Tostig too were wiser than he I love the man but not his fantasies.

#### Re-enter Tostig.

Well, brother, [umbria?

When didst thou hear from thy North-Tostig. When did I hear aught but this "When" from thee?

Leave me alone, brother, with my Northumbria:—

She is my mistress, let me look to her! The King hath made me Earl; make me not fool! [me Earl!

Nor make the King a fool, who made

*Har.* No, Tostig—lest I make myself a fool [make thee Earl.

Who made the King who made thee, Tostig. Why chafest thou? Thou knowest I soon go wild.

*Gurth.* Come, come! as yet thou art not gone so wild [of us.

But thou canst hear the best and wisest

*Har.* So says old Gurth, not I: yet hear! thine earldom, [crown

Tostig, hath been a kingdom. Their old is yet a force among them, a sun set

But leaving light enough for Alfgar's house [ghastly glare

To strike thee down by—nay, this May heat their fancies,

*Tostig.* My most worthy brother, That art the quietest man in all the world— [war

Ay, ay and wise in peace and great in Pray God the people choose thee for their king! [win

But all the powers of the house of God—Are not enframed in thee.

*Har.* Thank the Saints, no! But thou hast drain'd them shallow by thy toils, [King:

And thou art ever here about the Thine absence well may seem a want of care. [of Godwin

Cling to their love; for, now the sons

St. Olaf, not while I am by ! Come,  
envy,

Like the rough bear beneath the tree,  
good brother,

Waits till the man let go.

*Tostig.* Good counsel truly !

I heard from my Northumbria yesterday.  
[Northumbria ? Well ?]

*Har.* How goes it then with thy

*Tostig.* And wouldst thou that it  
 went aught else than well ?

*Har.* I would it went as well as with  
 mine earldom.

Leofwin's and Gurth's.

*Tostig.* Ye govern milder men.

*Gurth.* We have made them milder  
 by just government.

*Tostig.* Ay, ever give yourselves  
 your own good word.

*Leof.* An honest gift by all the  
 Saints, if giver

And taker be but honest ! but they  
 bribe

Each other, and so offer, an honest  
 world

Will not believe them.

*Har.* I may tell thee, *Tostig*,  
[day.]

I heard from thy Northumberland, to-  
[my nakedness]

*Tostig.* From spies of mine to spy  
 In my poor North !

*Har.* There is a movement there,  
 A blind one—nothing yet.

*Tostig.* Crush it at once  
 With all the power I have !—I must—I  
 will !—[dom there,

Crush it half-born ! Fool still ? or wis-  
 My wise head-shaking Harold ?

*Har.* Make not thou  
 The nothing something. Wisdom when  
 in power [but smile]

And wisest, should not frown as Power,  
 As kindness, watching all, till the true  
 must [when to strike—]

Shall make her strike as Power : but  
 O *Tostig*, O dear brother—if they  
 prance,

Rein in, not lash them, lest they rear  
 and run

And break both neck and axle.

*Tostig.* Good again !

Good counsel tho' scarce needed. Pour  
 not water

In the full vessel running out at top  
 To swamp the house.

*Leof.* Nor thou be a wild thing  
 Out of the waste, to turn and bite the  
 hand

Would help thee from the trap.

*Tostig.* Thou playest in tune.

*Leof.* To the deaf adder thee, that  
 wilt not dance

However wisely charm'd.

*Tostig.* No more, no more !  
*Gurth.* I likewise cry 'no more.'

Unwholesome talk [hast a tongue !]  
 For Godwin's house ! Leofwin, thou

*Tostig*, thou lookst as thou would'st  
 spring upon him.

St. Olaf, not while I am by ! Come,  
come,

Join hands, let brethren dwell in unity ;  
 Let kith and kin stand close as our  
 shield-wall, [a tongue,

Who breaks us then ? I say, thou hast  
 And *Tostig* is not stout enough to bear it

Vex him not, Leofwin.

*Tostig.* No, I am not vext,—  
 Altho' ye seek to vex me, one and all.

I have to make report of my good earl-  
 dom [you.]

To the good king who gave it—not to  
 Nor any of you,—I am not vext at all.

*Har.* The king ? the king is ever at  
 his prayers ;

In all that handles matter of the state  
 I am the king.

*Tostig.* That shalt thou never be  
 If I can thwart thee.

*Har.* Brother, brother !  
*Tostig.* Away !

*[Exit Tostig.]*

*Queen.* Spite of this grisly star ye  
 Poor *Tostig*. [three must gall]

*Leof.* *Tostig*, sister, galls himself,  
 He cannot smell a rose but pricks his  
 nose [rose.]

Against the thorn, and rails against the  
*Queen.* I am the only rose of all the  
 stock [him, so]

That never thorn'd him ; Edward loves  
 Ye hate him. Harold always hated him.

Why—how they fought when boys—  
 and, Holy Mary !

How Harold used to beat him !

*Har.* Why, boys will fight.  
 Leofwin would often fight me, and I  
 beat him. [much ado]

Even old Gurth would fight. I had  
 To hold mine own against old Gurth.

Old Gurth, [cause ; but Tostig—]  
 We fought like great states for grave

On a sudden—at a something—for a  
 nothing—[we fought]

The boy would fist me hard, and when  
 I conquer'd, and he loved me none the  
 less, [tell him]

Till thou wouldst get him ail apart, and  
 That where he was but worsted, he was  
 wrong'd. [him too ;]

Ah ! thou hast taught the king to spoil  
 Now the spoilt child sways both. Take  
 heed, take heed ;

Thou art the Queen ; ye are boy and  
 girl no more ;

Side not with *Tostig* in any violence,  
 Lest thou be sideways guilty of the vio-  
 lence.

*Queen.* Come fall not foul on me. I  
 leave thee, brother.

*Har.* Nay, my good sister—

*[Exeunt Queen, Harold, Gurth and Leofwin.]*

*Alf.* Gamel, son of Orm,  
 What thinkest thou this means ?

*[Pointing to the comet.]*  
 Gamel. War, my dear lady,

War, waste, plague, famine, all malignities. [his earldom.]

*Ald.* It means the fall of Tostig from *Gamel*. That were too small a matter for a comet! [house of Alfgar.]

*Ald.* It means the lifting of the *Gamel*. Too small! a comet would not show for that! [compass it.]

*Ald.* Not small for thee if thou canst *Gamel*. Thy love? [man;]

*Ald.* As much as I can give thee, This Tostig is, or like to be, a tyrant; Stir up thy people: oust him!

*Gamel.* And thy love?

*Ald.* As much as thou canst bear.

*Gamel.* I can bear all,

And not be giddy.

*Ald.* No more now: to-morrow.

SCENE II.—*In the Garden. The King's House near London. Sunset.*

*Edith.* Mad for thy mate, passionate nightingale . . . [ment;]  
I love thee for it—ay, but stay a mo-  
He can but stay a moment; he is going.  
I fain would hear him coming! . . . near  
me . . . near,

Somewhere—To draw him nearer with  
Like thine to thine. [a charm]

(Singing.)

*Love is come with a song and a smile,  
Welcome Love with a smile and a song:  
Love can stay but a little while.  
Why cannot he stay? They call him  
away:*

*Ye do him wrong, ye do him wrong;  
Love will stay for a whole life long.*

Enter Harold.

*Har.* The nightingales at Havering-  
in-the-bower [ward's prayers]  
Sang out their loves so loud, that Ed-  
Were deafen'd, and he prayed them  
dumb, and thus [gale!]

I dumb thee too, my wingless nightin-  
[Kissing her.]

*Edith.* Thou art my music! Would  
their wings were mine [go?]

To follow thee to Flanders! Must thou  
*Har.* Not must, but will. It is but  
for one moon. [ward's hall]

*Edith.* Leaving so many foes in Ed-  
To league against thy weal. The Lady  
Aldwyth [on thee,

Was here to-day, and when she touch'd  
She stammer'd in her hate; I am sure  
she hates thee,  
Pants for thy blood.

*Har.* Well, I have given her cause—  
I fear no woman.

*Edith.* Hate not one who felt  
Some pity for thy hater! I am sure  
Her morning wanted sunlight, she so  
praised [pale—

The convent and lone life—within the  
Beyond the passion. Nay—she held  
with Edward,

At least methought she held with holy  
Edward,

That marriage was half sin.

*Har.* A lesson worth  
Finger and thumb—thus (snaps his fin-  
gers). And my answer to it—  
See here—an interwoven H and E!

Take thou this ring; I will demand  
his ward [would she?]

From Edward when I come again. Ay,  
She to shut up my blossom in the dark!  
Thou art my nun, thy cloister in mine  
arms.

*Edith.* (taking the ring). Yea, but  
Earl Tostig—

*Har.* That's a truer fear!  
For if the North take fire, I should be  
back;

I shall be, soon enough.

*Edith.* Ay, but last night  
An evil dream that ever came and went—

*Har.* A gnat that vex't thy pillow!  
Had I been by [what was it?]

I would have spoil'd his horn. My girl,  
*Edith.* Oh! that thou wert not going!

For so methought it was our marriage-  
morn, [man]

And while we stood together, a dead  
Rose from behind the altar, tore away  
My marriage ring, and rent my bridal  
veil; [all fill'd]

And then I turn'd, and saw the church  
With dead men upright from their  
graves, and all [thee,

The dead men made at thee to murder  
But thou didst back thyself against a  
pillar, [axe—

And strike among them with thy battle  
There, what a dream

*Har.* Well, well—a dream—no more!  
*Edith.* Did not Heaven speak to men  
in dreams of old? [what, my child;

*Har.* Ay—well—of old. I tell thee  
Thou hast misread this merry dream of  
thine,

Taken the rifted pillars of the wood  
For smooth stone columns of the sanc-  
tuary,

The shadows of a hundred fat dead deer  
For dead men's ghosts. True, that the  
battle-axe [the bow—

Was out of place; it should have been  
Come, thou shalt dream no more such  
dreams; I swear it, [phires—these

By mine own eyes—and these two sap-  
Twin rubies, that are amulets against  
all

The kisses of all kind of womankind  
In Flanders, till the sea shall roll me  
To tumble at thy feet. [back

*Edith.* That would but shame me,  
Rather than make me vain. The sea  
may roll [ing rock

Sand, shingle, shore-wed, not the liv-  
Which guards the land.

*Har.* Except it be a soft one,  
And undereaten to the fall. Mine arm  
let . . .

This last . . . upon thine eyelids, to  
shut in

A happier dream. Sleep, sleep, and thou shalt see

My grayhounds fleeting like a beam of light,

And hear my peregrine and her bells in heaven ; [heaven's ;

And other bells on earth, which yet are Guess what they be.

Edith. He cannot guess who knows. Farewell, my king.

Har. Not yet, but then—my queen. [Exeunt.

Enter Aldwyth from the thicket.

Ald. The kiss that charms thine eyelids into sleep, [could love him

Will hold mine waking. Hate him? I More, tenfold, than this fearful child can do ;

Griffyth I hated : why not hate the foe Of England? Griffyth when I saw him flee, [the blood

Chased deer-like up his mountains, all That should have only pulsed for Griffyth beat [love him,

For his pursuer. I love him or think I If he were King of England, I his queen,

I might be sure of it. Nay, I do love him.— [the king

She must be cloister'd somehow, lest Should yield his ward to Harold's will. What harm? [love.—

She hath but blood enough to live, not When Harold goes and Tostig, shall I play [upon him?

The craftier Tostig with him? fawn Chime in with all? "O thou more saint than king!" [relics!"

And that were true enough. "O blessed "O Holy Peter!" If he found me thus,

Harold might hate me ; he is broad and honest, [like Aldwyth . . .

Breathing an easy gladness . . . not For which I strangely love him. Should not England [that part

Love Aldwyth, if she stay the feuds The sons of Godwin from the sons of Alfgar [Aldwyth!

By such a marrying? Courage, noble Let all thy people bless thee!

Our wild Tostig, Edward hath made him Earl: he would be king :— [the bone.—

The dog that snapt the shadow, dropt I trust he may do well, this Ganel, whom

I play upon, that he may play the note Whereat the dog shall howl and run, and Harold [him,

Hear the king's music, all alone with Pronounced his heir of England.

I see the goal and half the way to it.— Peace-lover is our Harold for the sake Of England's wholeness—so—to shake the North [division—

With earthquake and disruption—some Then fling mine own fair person in the gap

A sacrifice to Harold, a peace-offering, A scape-goat marriage—all the sins of both [life

The houses on mine head—then a fair And bless the Queen of England.

Morcar (coming from the thicket). Art thou assured

By this, that Harold loves but Edith? Ald. Morcar!

Why creepst thou like a timorous beast of prey

Out of the bush by night? Mor. I follow'd thee.

Ald. Follow my lead, and I will make thee earl.

Mor. What lead then?

Ald. Thou shalt flash it secretly Among the good Northumbrian folk, that I— [ently

That Harold loves me—yea, and pres- That I and Harold are betroth'd—and last— [I would not

Perchance that Harold wrongs me; tho' That it should come to that.

Mor. I will both flash And thunder for thee.

Ald. I said "secretly:" It is the flash that murders, the poor thunder

Never harm'd head.

Mor. But thunder may bring down That which the flash hath stricken.

Ald. Down with Tostig! That first of all.—And when doth Harold go? [then to Flanders.

Mor. To-morrow—first to Bosham, Ald. Not to come back till Tostig shall have shown [the teeth

And redden'd with his people's blood That shall be broken by us—yea, and thou [dream thyself

Chair'd in his place. Good-night, and Their chosen Earl. [Exit Aldwyth.

Mor. Earl first, and after that Who knows I may not dream myself their king!

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Seashore. Ponthieu. Night. Harold and his Men, wrecked.

Har. Friends, in that last inhospitable plunge [are whole ;

Our boat hath burst her ribs ; but ours I have but bark'd my hands.

Attendant. I dug mine into My old fast friend the shore, and clinging thus [deep

Felt the remorseless outdraught of the Haul like a great strong fellow at my legs, [that came

And then I rose and ran. The blast So suddenly hath fallen as suddenly—

Put thou the comet and this blast together—

Har. Put thou thyself and mother-wit together.

Be not a fool!

*Enter Fishermen with torches, Harold going up to one of them, Rolf.*

Wicked sea-will-o'-the wisp !  
Wolf of the shore ! dog, with thy lying  
lights [thine !  
Thou hast betray'd us on these rocks of  
*Rolf.* Ay, but thou liest as loud as  
the black herring-pond behind thee.  
We be fishermen, I came to see after  
my nets.

*Har.* To drag us into them. Fishermen ? devils ! [false fires,  
Who, while ye fish for men with your  
Let the great Devil fish for your own  
souls.

*Rolf.* Nay then, we be liker the blessed  
Apostles ; they were fishers of men,  
Father Jean says.

*Har.* I had liefer that the fish had  
swallowed me,  
Like Jonah, than have known there  
were such devils.

What's to be done ?

[*To his Men—goes apart with them.*  
*Fisherman.* Rolf, what fish did swallow  
Jonah ?

*Rolf.* A whale !

*Fish.* Then a whale to a whelk we  
have swallowed the King of England.  
I saw him over there. Look thee, Rolf,  
when I was down in the fever, she was  
down with the hunger, and thou didst  
stand by her and give her thy crabs, and  
set her up again, till now, by the patient  
Saints, she's as crab'd as ever.

*Rolf.* And I'll give her my crabs  
again, when thou art down again.

*Fish.* I thank thee, Rolf. Run thou  
to Count Guy ; he is hard at hand. Tell  
him what hath crept into our creel, and  
he will fee thee as freely as he will  
wrench this outlander's ransom out of  
him—and why not ? for what right had  
he to get himself wrecked on another  
man's land ?

*Rolf.* Thou art the human-hearted-  
est, Christian-charitiest of all crab-  
catchers ! Share and share alike !

[*Exit.*

*Har. (to Fisherman).* Fellow, dost  
thou catch crabs ?

*Fish.* As few as I may in a wind,  
and less than I would in a calm. Ay !

*Har.* I have a mind that thou shalt

*Fish.* How ? [catch no more.

*Har.* I have a mind to brain thee  
with mine axe.

*Fish.* Ay, do, do, and our great  
Count-crab will make his nippers meet  
in thine heart ; he'll sweat it out of  
thee, he'll sweat it out of thee. Look,  
he's here ! He'll speak for himself !  
Hold thine own, if thou canst !

*Enter Guy, Count of Ponthieu.*

*Har.* Guy, Count of Ponthieu !

*Guy.* Harold, Earl of Wessex !

*Har.* Thy villains with their lying  
lights have wreck'd us !

*Guy.* Art thou not Earl of Wessex ?

*Har.* In mine earldom  
A man may hang gold bracelets on a  
bush, [back  
And leave them for a year, and coming  
Find them again.

*Guy.* Thou art a mighty man  
In thine own earldom !

*Har.* Were such murderous liars  
In Wessex—if I caught them, they  
should hang [mew  
Cliff-gibbeted for sea-marks ; our sea-  
Winging their only wail !

*Guy.* Ay, but my men  
Hold that the shipwreckt are accursed  
of God ;— [men ?

What hinders me to hold with mine own  
*Har.* The Christian manhood of the  
man who reigns !

*Guy.* Ay, rave thy worst, but in our  
oubliettes  
Thou shalt or rot or ransom. Hale him  
hence ! [*To one of his attendants.*  
Fly thou to William ; tell him we have  
Harold.

SCENE II.—Bayeux. Palace. Count  
William and William Malet.

*William.* We hold our Saxon wood-  
cock in the springe,  
But he begins to flutter. As I think  
He was thine host in England when I  
went  
To visit Edward.

*Malet.* Yea, and there, my lord,  
To make allowance for their rougher  
fashions,

I found him all a noble host should be.

*Will.* Thou art his friend : thou  
know'st my claim on England

Thro' Edward's promise : we have him  
in the toils. [him feel,

And it were well, if thou shouldst let  
How dense a fold of danger nets him  
round,

So that he bristle himself against my  
will. [I were you ?

*Malet.* What would I do, my lord, if

*Will.* What wouldst thou do ?

*Malet.* My lord, he is thy guest.

*Will.* Nay, by the splendor of God,  
no guest of mine.

He came not to see me, had past me by  
To hunt and hawk elsewhere, save for  
the fate [blast,

Which hunted him when that un-Saxon  
And bolts of thunder moulded in high  
heaven [and crack'd

To serve the Norman purpose, drave  
His boat on Ponthieu beach ; where  
our friend Guy [the rack,

Had wrung his ransom from him by  
But that I stept between and purchased  
him,

Translating his captivity from Guy  
To mine own hearth at Bayeux, where  
he sits my ransom'd prisoner.

*Malet.* Well, if not with gold,  
With golden deeds and iron strokes  
that brought

Thy war with Brittany to a goodlier  
close

Than else had been, he paid his ransom  
back. [not like to league

*Will.* So that henceforth they are  
With Harold against me.

*Malet.* A marvel, how  
He from the liquid sands of Coesnon  
Haled thy shore-swallow'd, armor'd  
Normans up

To fight for thee again!

*Will.* Perchance against

Their savor, save thou save him from  
himself. [again, my lord.

*Malet.* But I should let him home

*Will.* Simple! let fly the bird with-  
in the hand, [bush!

To catch the bird again within the  
No. [with me;

Smooth thou my way, before he clash  
I want his voice in England for the

crown, [round;

I want thy voice with him to bring him  
And being brave he must be subtly

cow'd, [swear

And being truthful wrought upon to  
Vows that he dare not break, England

our own [dear friend

Thro' Harold's help, he shall be my  
As well as thine, and thou thyself

shall have [ritory.

Large lordship there of lands and ter-  
*Malet.* I know thy purpose; he and

Wulfnoth never [meet

Have met, except in public; shall they  
In private? I have often talk'd with

Wulfnoth, [these may act

And stuff'd the boy with fears that  
On Harold when they meet.

*Will.* Then let them meet!

*Malet.* I can but love this noble,  
honest, Harold.

*Will.* Love him! why not? thine is  
a loving office, [man:

I have commission'd thee to save the  
Help the good ship, showing the sunk-

en rock,  
Or he is wreckt for ever.

*Enter William Rufus.*

*William Rufus.* Father.

*Will.* Well, boy.

*Will. Ruf.* They have taken away  
the toy thou gavest me,

The Norman knight.

*Will.* Why, boy?

*Will. Ruf.* Because I broke

The horse's leg—it was mine own to  
break;

I like to have my toys, and break them  
100.

*Will.* Well, thou shalt have another  
Norman knight!

*Will. Ruf.* And may I break his legs?

*Will.* Yea,—get thee gone!

*Will. Ruf.* I'll tell them I have had  
my way with thee. [*Exit.*

*Malet.* I never knew thee check thy  
will for ought

Save for the prattling of thy little ones.

*Will.* Who shall be kings of Eng-  
land. I am heir

Of England by the promise of her king.  
*Malet.* But there the great Assembly

choose their king, [England.

The choice of England is the voice of  
*Will.* I will be king of England by

the laws,

The choice, and voice of England.

*Malet.* Can that be?

*Will.* The voice of any people is the  
sword [beats them down.

That guards them, or the sword that  
Here comes the would-be what I will

be . . . kinglike . . . [es break,

Tho' scarce at ease: for, save our mesh-  
More kinglike he than like to prove a

king.

[*Enter Harold, musing, with his eyes*  
on the ground. [me.

He sees me not—and yet he dreams of  
Earl, wilt thou fly my falcons this fair

day? [against the wind.

They are of the best, strong-wing'd  
*Har.* (looking up suddenly, having

caught but the last word.) Which  
way does it blow?

*Will.* Blowing for England, ha?

Not yet. Thou hast not learnt thy  
quarters here. [these towers.

The winds so cross and jostle among  
*Har.* Count of the Normans, thou

hast ransom'd us,

Maintain'd, and entertained us royally!  
*Will.* And thou for us hast fought

as loyally, [ever!

Which binds us friendship-fast for  
*Har.* Good!

But lest we turn the scale of courtesy  
By too much pressure on it, I would

fain, [home with us,

Since thou hast promised Wulfnoth  
Be home again with Wulfnoth.

*Will.* Stay—as yet  
Thou hast but seen how Norman hands

can strike,  
But walk'd our Norman field, scarce

touch'd or tasted,  
Thou splendors of our Court.

*Har.* I am in no mood;  
I should be as the shadow of a cloud

Crossing your light.  
*Will.* Nay, rest a week or two,

And we will fill thee full of Norman  
sun, [mists

And send thee back among thine island  
With laughter.

*Har.* Count, I thank thee, but had  
rather [Saxon downs,

Breathe the free wind from off our  
Tho' charged with all the wet of all the

west. [thou shalt.

*Will.* Why if thou wilt, so let it be—  
That were a graceless hospitality

To chain the free guest to the ban-  
quet-board; [Hartleur,

To-morrow we will ride with thee to  
And see thee shipt, and pray in thy

behalf [which crack'd  
For happier homeward winds than that

Thy bark at Ponthieu,—yet to us in  
 faith, [know  
 A happy one—whereby we came to  
 Thy valor and thy value, noble earl.  
 Ay, and perchance a happy one for  
 thee, [row—  
 Provided—I will go with thee to-mor-  
 Nay—but there be conditions, easy  
 ones, [easily.  
 So thou, fair friend, will take them

*Enter Page.*

*Page.* My lord, there is a post from  
 over seas  
 With news for thee. [*Exit Page.*  
*Will.* Come, Malet, let us hear!  
 [*Exeunt Count William and Malet.*  
*Har.* Conditions? What conditions?  
 pay him back [nay—  
 His ransom? “easy”—that were easy—  
 No money-lover he! What said the  
 King?  
 “I pray you do not go to Normandy.”  
 And fate hath blown me hither, bound  
 me too  
 With bitter obligation to the Count—  
 Have I not fought it out? What did  
 he mean? [his eyes,  
 There lodged a gleaming grimness in  
 Gave his shorn smile the lie. The  
 walls oppress me, [the heaven,  
 And you huge keep that hinders half  
 Free air! free field!

[*Moves to go out. A Man-at-Arms  
 follows him.*

*Har.* (to the Man-at-Arms.) I need  
 thee not. Why dost thou follow  
 me?

*Man-at-Arms.* I have the Count's  
 commands to follow thee.

*Har.* What then? Am I in danger  
 in this court?

*Man-at-Arms.* I cannot tell. I have  
 the Count's commands.

*Har.* Stand out of earshot then, and  
 In eyeshot. [keep me still

*Man-at-Arms.* Yea, lord Harold.  
 [*Withdraws.*

*Har.* And arm'd men  
 Ever keep watch beside my chamber  
 door,

And if I walk within the lonely wood,  
 There is an arm'd man ever glides be-  
 hind!

*Enter Malet.*

Why am I follow'd, haunted, harass'd,  
 See yonder! [watch'd?

[*Pointing to Man-at-Arms.*  
*Malet.* 'Tis the good Count's care  
 for thee! [the Normans,  
 The Normans love thee not, nor thou  
 Or—so they deem.

*Har.* But wherefore is the wind,  
 Which way soever the vane-arrow  
 swing,  
 Not ever fair for England? Why but  
 now [not hence  
 He said (thou heardst him) that I must  
 Save on conditions.

*Malet.* So in truth he said.

*Har.* Malet, thy mother was an  
 Englishwoman;  
 There somewhere beats an English  
 pulse in thee!

*Malet.* Well—for my mother's sake  
 I love your England,

But for my father I love Normandy.

*Har.* Speak for thy mother's sake,  
 and tell me true.

*Malet.* Then for my mother's sake,  
 and England's sake

That suffers in the daily want of thee,  
 Obey the Count's conditions, my good  
 friend. [honorable!

*Har.* How, Malet, if they be not  
*Malet.* Seem to obey them.

*Har.* Better die than lie!

*Malet.* Choose therefore whether  
 thou wilt have thy conscience  
 White as a maiden's hand, or whether  
 England

Be shatter'd into fragments.

*Har.* News from England?

*Malet.* Morcar and Edwin have  
 stirr'd up the Thanes [nance;  
 Against thy brother Tostig's gover-  
 And all the North of Humber is one  
 storm. [should be there!

*Har.* I should be there, Malet,

*Malet.* And Tostig in his own hall  
 on suspicion [his guest.  
 Hath massacred the Thane that was  
 Gamel, the son of Orm: and there be  
 As villainously slain. [more

*Har.* The wolf! the beast!  
 Ill news for guests, ha, Malet! More?  
 What more? [of this?

What do they say? did Edward know  
*Malet.* They say, his wife was know-  
 ing and abetting.

*Har.* They say, his wife!—To marry  
 and have no husband [be there.  
 Makes the wife fool. My God, I should  
 I'll hack my way to the sea.

*Malet.* Thou canst not, Harold;  
 Our Duke is all between thee and the  
 sea,

Our Duke is all about thee like a God;  
 All passes block'd. Obey him, speak  
 him fair,

For he is only debonair to those  
 That follow where he leads, but stark  
 as death [here is Wulfnoth!

To those that cross him.—Look thou,  
 I leave thee to thy talk with him alone;  
 How wan, poor lad! how sick and sad  
 for home! [*Exit Malet.*

*Har.* (muttering.) Go not to Nor-  
 mandy—go not to Normandy!

*Enter Wulfnoth.*

Poor brother! still a hostage!

*Wulfnoth.* Yea, and I  
 Shall see the dewy kiss of dawn no  
 more [tall cliffs,

Make blush the maiden-white of our  
 Nor mark the sea-bird rouse himself  
 and hover [sky

Above the windy ripple, and fill the

With free sea-laughter—never—save indeed [mooded Duke  
Thou canst make yield this iron-  
To let me go.

Har. Why, brother, so he will ;  
But on conditions. Canst thou guess  
at them. [corridor,

Wulf. Draw nearer.—I was in the  
I saw him coming with his brother Odo  
The Bayeux bishop, and I hid myself.

Har. They did thee wrong who  
made thee hostage ; thou  
Wast ever fearful.

Wulf. And he spoke—I heard him—  
“This Harold is not of the royal blood,  
Can have no right to the crown,” and

Odo said, [might : he is here,  
“Thine is the right, for thine the  
And yonder is thy keep.”

Har. No, Wulfno h, no.  
Wulf. And William laugh'd and  
swore that might was right,

Far as he knew in this poor world of  
ours— [with us,  
“Marry, the Saints must go along  
And, brother, we will find a way,”

said he—  
Yea, yea, he would be king of England.

Har. Never !  
Wulf. Yea, but thou must not this  
way answer him. [the truth ?

Har. Is it not better still to speak  
Wulf. Not here, or thou wilt never  
hence nor I : [goal

For in the racing toward this golden  
He turns not right or left, but tramples  
flat [never heard

Whatever thwarts him ; hast thou  
His savagery at Alençon,—the town  
Hung out raw hides along their walls,  
and cried

“Work for the tanner.”  
Har. That had anger'd me  
Had I been William.

Wulf. Nay, but he had prisoners,  
He tore their eyes out, sliced their  
hands away, [battlements

And flung them streaming o'er the  
Upon the heads of those who walk'd  
within— [own sake.

O speak him fair, Harold, for thine  
Har. Your Welshman says, “The  
Truth against the World,”

Much more the truth against myself.  
Wulf. Thyself ?

But for my sake, oh brother ! oh ! for  
my sake !

Har. Poor Wulfnoth ! do they not  
entreat thee well ? [dungeon loom

Wulf. I see the blackness of my  
Across their lamps of revel, and beyond  
The merriest murmurs of their ban-  
quet clank [wall.

The shackles that will bind me to the  
Har. Too fearful still !

Wulf. Oh no, no—speak him fair !  
Call it to temporize ; and not to lie,  
Harold, I do not counsel thee to lie.

The man that hath to foil a murderous  
May, surely, play with words. [aim

Har. Words are the man.  
Not ev'n for thy sake, brother, would I  
Wulf. Then for thine Edith ? [lie.

Har. There thou prickst me deep.  
Wulf. And for our Mother Eng-  
land ?

Har. Deeper still.  
Wulf. And deeper still the deep-  
down oubliette, [day—

Down thirty feet below the smiling  
In blackness—dogs' food thrown upon  
thy head.

And over thee the suns arise and set,  
And the lark sings, the sweet stars  
come and go, [their fields

And men are at their markets, in  
And woo their loves and have forgot-  
ten thee ; [grave,

And thou are upright in thy living  
Where there is barely room to shift  
thy side, [thee ;

And all thine England hath forgotten  
And he our lazy-pious Norman King,  
With all his Normans round him once  
again, [thee.

Counts his old beads, and hath forgot-  
Har. Thou art of my blood, and so  
metlinks, my Loy, [Peace !

Thy fears infect me beyond reason.  
Wulf. And then our fiery Tostig,  
while thy hands [rise

Are palsied here, if his Northumbrians  
And hurl him from them,—I have  
heard the Normans [not make

Count upon this confusion—may he  
A league with William, so to bring  
him back ? [of the chance.

Har. That lies within the shadow  
Wulf. And like a river in flood  
thro' a burst dam [good King

Descends the ruthless Norman—our  
Kneels mumbling some old bone—our  
helpless folk [own blood—

Are wash'd away, wailing, in their  
Har. Wailing ! not warring ? Boy,  
thou hast forgotten

That thou art English.  
Wulf. Then our modest women—

I know the Norman license—thine own  
Edith— [—William comes.

Har. No more ! I will not hear thee  
Wulf. I dare not well be seen in  
talk with thee. [with thee.

Make thou not mention that I spake  
[Moves away to the back of the stage.

Enter William, Malet, and Officer.  
Officer. We have the man that rail'd  
against thy birth.

Will. Tear out his tongue.  
Officer. He shall not rail again ;  
He said that he should see confusion  
fall

On thee and on thine house.  
Will. Tear out his eyes,  
And plunge him into prison.

Officer. It shall be done.  
[Exit Officer.

Will. Look not amazed, fair earl !  
Better leave undone

Than do by halves—tongueless and  
eyeless, prison'd— [man at once !

*Har.* Better methinks have slain the

*Will.* We have respect for man's  
immortal soul, [war ;  
We seldom take man's life, except in  
It frights the traitor more to main and  
blind. [have scorn'd the man,

*Har.* In mine own land I should  
Or lash'd his rascal back, and let him  
go.

*Will.* And let him go ? To slander  
thee again ! [day

Yet in thine own land in thy father's  
They blinded my young kinsman, Al-  
fred—ay,

Some said it was thy father's deed.

*Har.* They lied.

*Will.* But thou and he—whom art  
thy word, for thou  
Art known a speaker of the truth, I  
free

From this foul charge—

*Har.* Nay, nay, he freed himself  
By oath and compurgation from the  
charge. [him of it.

The king, the lords, the people clear'd  
*Will.* But thou and he drove our  
good Normans out [yet,

From England, and this rankles in us  
Archbishop Robert hardly scaped with  
life. [the Archbishop !

*Har.* Archbishop Robert ! Robert  
Robert of Jumiegés, he that—

*Malet.* Quiet ! quiet !

*Har.* Count ! if there sat within thy  
Norman chair

A ruler all for England—one who fill'd  
All offices, all bishoprics with English—  
We could not move from Dover to the  
Humber

Saving thro' Norman bishoprics—I say  
Ye would applaud that Norman who  
should drive

The stranger to the fiends !

*Will.* Why, that is reason !  
Warrior thou art, and mighty wise  
withal ! [lords

Ay, ay, but many among our Norman  
Hate thee for this, and press upon me  
—saying [hands—

God and the sea have given thee to our  
To plunge thee into life-long prison  
here :—

Yet I hold out against them, as I may,  
Yea—would hold out, yea, tho' they  
should revolt— [cause ;

For thou hast done the battle in my  
I am thy fastest friend in Normandy.

*Har.* I am doubly bound to thee. . .  
if this be so. [and would myself

*Will.* And I would bind thee more,  
Be bounden to thee more.

*Har.* Then let me hence  
With Wulfnoth to King Edward.

*Will.* So we will.  
We hear he hath not long to live.

*Har.* It may be.

*Will.* Why then the heir of England,  
who is he ?

*Har.* The Atheling is nearest to the  
throne.

*Will.* But sickly, slight, half-witted  
and a child,

Will England have him king ?

*Har.* It may be, no.

*Will.* And hath King Edward not  
pronounced his heir ?

*Har.* Not that I know.

*Will.* When he was here in Nor-  
mandy, [found him  
He loved us and we him because we  
A Norman of the Normans.

*Har.* So did we.

*Will.* A gentle, gracious, pure and  
saintly man ! [him,

And grateful to the hand that shielded  
He promised that if ever he were king  
In England, he would give his kingly  
voice [this ?

To me as his successor. Knowest thou

*Har.* I learn it now.

*Will.* Thou knowest I am his cousin,  
And that my wife descends from Al-  
fred ?

*Har.* Ay.

*Will.* Who hath a better claim then  
to the crown

So that ye will not crown the Athe-  
ling ?

*Har.* None that I know . . . if that  
King Edward's will. [but hung upon

*Will.* Wilt thou uphold my claim ?

*Malet* (aside to Harold). Be careful

of thine answer, my good friend.

*Wulf.* (aside to Harold). Oh ! Har-  
old, for my sake and for thine own !

*Har.* Ay . . . if the king have not  
revoked his promise.

*Will.* But hath he done it then ?

*Har.* Not that I know.

*Will.* Good, good, and thou wilt help  
me to the crown.

*Har.* Ay . . . if the Witan will con-  
sent to this. [in England, man,

*Will.* Thou art the mightiest voice  
Thy voice will lead the Witan—shall I  
have it ?

*Wulf* (aside to Harold). Oh ! Harold,  
if thou love thine Edith, ay,

*Har.* Ay, if—

*Malet* (aside to Harold). Thine ' ifs '  
will sear thine eyes out—ay.

*Will.* I ask thee, wilt thou help me  
to the crown ?

And I will make thee my great Earl of  
Earls,

Foremost in England and in Nor-  
mandy ;

Thou shalt be verily king—all but the  
name—

For I shall most sojourn in Normandy ;  
And thou be my vice-king in England.

Speak.

*Wulf.* (aside to Harold). Ay, brother  
—for the sake of England—ay.

*Har.* My lord. [now.

*Malet* (aside to Harold). Take heed

*Har.* Ay.

*Will.*

I am content.

For thou art truthful, and thy word thy bond. [Harfeur.

To-morrow will we ride with thee to [Exit William.

Malet. Harold, I am thy friend, one life with thee. [mine,

And even as I should bless thee saving I thank thee now for having saved thyself. [Exit Malet.

Har. For having lost myself to save myself, [a lad

Said 'ay' when I meant 'no,' lied like That dreads the pendent scourge, said 'ay' for 'no'! [oath—

Ay! No!—he hath not bound me by an Is 'ay' an oath? Is 'ay' strong as an oath?

Or is it the same sin to break my word As break mine oath? He call'd my word my bond!

He is a liar who knows I am a liar, And makes believe that he believes my word— [—no.

The crime be on his head—not bounden

*Suddenly doors are flung open, discovering in an inner hall Count William in his state robes, seated upon his throne, between two Bishops, Odo of Bayeux being one; in the centre of the hall an ark covered with cloth of gold; and on either side of it the Norman barons.*

Enter a Jailer before William's throne.

Will. (to Jailer). Knave, hast thou let thy prisoner scape?

Jailer. Sir Count, He had but one foot, he must have hopt away, help'd him.

Yea, some familiar spirit must have Will. Woe knave to thy familiar and to thee!

Give me thy keys. [They fall clashing. Nay let them lie. Stand there and wait my will. [The Jailer stands aside.

Will. (to Harold.) Hast thou such trustless jailors in thy North?

Har. We have few prisoners in mine earldom there, So less chance for false keepers.

Will. We have heard Of thy just, mild and equal governance;

Honor to thee! thou art perfect in all honor! [now

Thy naked word thy bond! confirm it Before our gather'd Norman baronage, For they will not believe thee—as I believe.

[Descends from his throne and stands by the ark. [bond!

Let all men here bear witness of our [Beckons to Harold who advances.

Enter Malet behind him. Lay thou thy hand upon this golden pall!

Behold the jewel of St. Pancratius Woven into the gold. Swear thou on this!

Har. What should I swear? Why should I swear on this?

Will. (savagely). Swear thou to help me to the crown of England.

Halet (whispering to Harold). My friend, thou hast gone too far to palter now.

Wulf. (whispering to Harold). Swear thou to-day, to-morrow is thine own.

Har. I swear to help thee to the crown of England

According as King Edward promises. Will. Thou must swear absolutely, noble Earl.

Halet (whispering). Delay is death to thee, ruin to England.

Wulf. (whispering). Swear, dearest brother, I beseech thee, swear!

Harold (putting his hand on the jewel). I swear to help thee to the crown of England. [not doubt thy word,

Will. Thanks, truthful Earl; I did But that my barons might believe thy word,

And that the holy Saints of Normandy, When thou art home in England, with thine own, [thy word,

Might strengthen thee in keeping of I made thee swear. Show him by whom he hath sworn.

The two Bishops advance and raise the cloth of gold. The bodies and bones of Saints are seen lying in the ark.

The holy bones of all the Canonized From all the holiest shrines in Nor-

Har. Horrible! [mandy. [They let the cloth fall again.

Will. Ay, for thou hast sworn an oath [hard earth rive

Which, if not kept, would make the To the very Devil's horns, the bright say cleave [hosts

To the very feet of God, and send her Of injured Saints to scatter sparks of plague [dash

Thro' all your cities, blast your infants, The torch of war among your standing corn, [blood.—Enough!

Dabble your hearths with your own Thou wilt not break it! I, the Count —the King— [est oath,

Thy friend—am grateful for thine honor—Not coming fiercely like a conqueror, now,

But softly as a bridegroom to his own. For I shall rule according to your laws, And make your ever-jarring Earldoms move

To music and in order—Angle, Jute, Dane, Saxon, Norman, help to build a throne [wind is fair

Out-towering hers of France....The For England now....To-night we will be merry. [leur.

To-morrow will I ride with thee to Har- [Exit William and all the Norman barons, &c.

Har. To-night we will be merry—and [to-morrow—

Juggler and bastard—bastard—he hates that most—

William the tanner's bastard! Would he heard me!

O God, that I were in some wide, waste field [him]

With nothing but my battle-axe and To spatter his brains! Why let earth rive, gulf in [own self.]

These cursed Normans—yea and mine Cleave heaven, and send thy saints that I may say [William]

Ev'n to their faces, 'If ye side with Ye are not noble.' How their pointed fingers [son]

Glared at me! Am I Harold, Harold, Of our great Godwin? Lo! I touch mine arms, [a liar's—]

My limbs—they are not mine—they are I mean to be a liar—I am not bound—

Stigand shall give me absolution for it— Did the chest move? did it move? I am utter craven [hast betray'd me!]

O Wulfnoth, Wulfnoth, brother, thou Wulf. Forgive me, brother, I will live here and die.

*Enter Page.*

Page. My lord! the Duke awaits thee at the banquet.

Har. Where they eat dead men's flesh, and drink their blood.

Page. My lord— [is so spiced,]

Har. I know your Norman cookery It masks all this. [death.]

Page. My lord! thou art white as Har. With looking on the dead. Am I so white? [I follow.]

Thy Duke will seem the darker. Hence, [Exeunt.]

### ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The King's Palace.* London. King Edward dying on a couch, and by him standing the Queen, Harold, Archbishop Stigand, Gurth, Leofwin, Archbishop Aldred, Aldwyth, and Edith.

Stig. Sleeping or dying there? If this be death, [thee King—]

Then our great Council wait to crown Come hither, I have a power; [to Harold] They call me near, for I am close to thee. [I,]

And England—I, old shrivell'd Stigand, Dry as an old wood-fungus on a dead I have a power! [tree,]

See here this little key about my neck! There lies a treasure buried down in Ely; [thee,]

If e'er the Norman grow too hard for Ask me for this at thy most need, son At thy most need—not sooner. [Harold,]

Har. So I will.

Stig. Red gold—a hundred purses—yea, and more! [these] If thou canst make a wholesome use of To chink against the Norman, I do believe

My old crook'd spine would bud out two young wings

To fly to heaven straight with,

Har. Thank thee, father: Thou art English, Edward too is English now, [ism.]

He hath clean repented of his Norman—

Stig. Ay, as the libertine repents who cannot [ing] serse

Make done undone, when thro' his dy-Shrills 'lost thro' thee.' They have

built their castle here; [adder] Our priories are Norman; the Norman

Hath bitten us; we are poison'd: our ls demi-Norman. He!—[dear England]

[Pointing to King Edward, sleeping.] Har. I would I were

As holy and as passionless as he! [him,] That I might rest as calmly! Look at

The rosy face, and long down—silvering beard, [mere.]

The brows unwrinkled as a summer Stig. A summer mere with sudden

wreckful gusts [he flamed] From a side-gorge. Passionless? How

When Tostig's anger'd earldom flung him, nay,

He fain had calcined all Northumbria To one black ash, but that thy patriot

passion [Tostig,] Siding with our great Council against

Out-passion'd his! Holy? ay, ay, for-sooth, [realm:]

A conscience for his own soul, not his A twilight conscience lighted thro' [be]

Thine by the sun; nay, by some sun to When all the world hath learnt to

speak the truth, [state] And lying were self-murder by that

Which was the exception.

Har. That sun may God speed! Stig. Come, Harold, shake the cloud

off! Har. Can I, father?

Our Tostig parted cursing me and England;

Our sister hates us for his banishment; He hath gone to kindle Norway against

England, And Wulfnoth is alone in Normandy.

For when I rode with William down to Harfeur, [follow;]

'Wulfnoth is sick,' he said; 'he cannot Then with that friendly-fiendly smile

of his, [little longer] 'We have learnt to love him, let him a

Remain a hostage for the loyalty Of Godwin's house.' As far as touches

Wulfnoth, I that so prized plain word and naked

truth Have sinn'd against it—all in vain.

Leof. Good brother, By all the truths that ever priest hath

preach'd, Of all the lies that ever men have lied, Thine is the pardonablest.

Har. May be so! I think it so, I think I am a fool

To think it can be otherwise than so.

*Stig.* Tut, tut, I have absolved thee :  
dost thou scorn me,  
Because I had my Canterbury pallium  
From one whom they disposed?

*Har.* No, Stigand, no !

*Stig.* Is naked truth actable in true  
life ?

I have heard a saying of thy father  
Godwin,

That, were a man of state nakedly true,  
Men would but take him for the craf-  
tier liar. [Devil himself ?

*Leof.* Be men less delicate than the  
I thought that naked truth would  
shame the Devil,

The Devil is so modest.

*Gerth.* He never said it !

*Leof.* Be thou not stupid-honest,  
brother Gerth ! [hold

*Har.* Better to be a liar's dog, and  
My master honest, than believe that  
lying [cannot

And ruling men are fatal twins that  
Move one without the other. Ed-  
ward wakes !—

Dazed—he hath seen a vision.

*Edw.* The green tree !

Then a great Angel past along the  
highest [once

Crying 'the doom of England,' and at  
He stood beside me, in his grasp a sword  
Of lightnings, wherewithal he cleft  
the tree [it from him

From off the bearing trunk, and hurl'd  
Three fields away, and then he dash'd  
and drench'd, [human blood,

He dyed, he soak'd the trunk with  
And brought the sunder'd tree again,  
and set it [tized in blood

Straight on the trunk, that thus bap-  
Grew ever high and higher, beyond my  
seeing, [the deep

And shot out sidelong boughs across  
That dropt themselves, and rooted in  
far isles [rose

Beyond my seeing : and the great Angel  
And past again along the highest crying  
'The doom of England!'—Tostig, raise  
my head ! [Falls back senseless.

*Har.* (raising him). Let Harold serve  
for Tostig !

*Queen.* Harold served  
Tostig so ill, he cannot serve for Tos-  
tig !

Ay, raise his head, for thou has laid  
it low !

The sickness of our saintly king, for  
whom

My prayers go up as fast as my tears  
fall,

I well believe, hath mainly drawn itself  
From lack of Tostig—thou hast banish'd  
him. [king himself !

*Har.* Nay—but the Council, and the  
*Queen.* Thou hatest him, hatest him.

*Har.* (coldly). Ay—Stigand, unriddle  
This vision, canst thou ?

*Stig.* Dotage !

*Edw.* (starting up). It is finish'd.

I have built the Lord a house—the  
Lord hath dwelt [house—

In darkness. I have built the Lord a  
Palms, flowers, pomegranates, golden  
cherubim [wall—

With twenty-cubit wings from wall to  
I have built the Lord a house—sing,  
Asaph ! clash [et priest !

The cymbal, Heman ! blow the trump-  
Fall, cloud, and fill the house—lo ! my  
Jacin and Boaz !— [two pillars,

[Seeing Harold and Gerth.

Harold, Gerth,—where am I ?

Where is the charter of our Westmin-  
ster ? [thy bed-

*Stig.* It lies beside thee, king, upon  
*Edw.* Sign, sign at once—take, sign  
it, Stigand, Aldred ! [and Leofwin,

Sign it, my good son Harold, Gerth,  
Sign it, my queen !

*All.* We have sign'd it.

*Edw.* It is finish'd !

The kingliest Abbey in all Christian  
lands,

The lordliest, loftiest minster ever built  
To Holy Peter in our English isle !

Let me be buried there, and all our  
kings,

And all our just and wise and holy men  
That shall be born hereafter. It is fin-  
ish'd !

Hast thou had absolution for thine  
oath ? [To Harold.

*Har.* Stigand hath given me absol-  
ution for it. [enough

*Edw.* Stigand is not canonical  
To save thee from the wrath of Norman  
Saints. [Saints of England

*Stig.* Norman enough ! Be there no  
To help us from their brethren yonder ?

*Edw.* Prelate,

The Saints are one, but those of Nor-  
manland [Aldred.

Are mightier than our own. Ask it of  
[To Harold.

*Aldred.* It shall be granted him, my  
king ; for he [mother

Who vows a vow to strangle his own  
Is guiltier keeping this, than breaking  
it.

*Edw.* O friends, I shall not overlive  
the day.

*Stig.* Why then the throne is empty.  
Who inherits ?

For tho' we be not bound by the king's  
voice [voice

In making of a king, yet the king's  
Is much toward his making. Who in-  
Edgar the Atheling ? [herits ?

*Edw.* No, no, but Harold.

I love him : he hath served me : none  
but he

Can rule all England. Yet the curse  
is on him

For swearing falsely by those blessed  
bones ;

He did not mean to keep his vow.

*Har.* Not mean

To make our English Norman.

*Edw.* That's a fake Godwin.

Who hated all the Normans ; but their  
Hath heard thee, Harold. [Saints

Edith. Oh ! my lord, my king !  
He knew not whom he swore by.

Edw. Yea, I know  
He knew not, but those heavenly ears  
have heard, [another,

Their curse is on him ; with thou bring  
Edith, upon his head ?

Edith. No, no, not I.

Edw. Why then, thou must not wed  
him.

Har. Wherefore, wherefore ?

Edw. O son, when thou didst tell  
me of thine oath, [given

I sorrow'd for my random promise  
To you fox-lion. I did not dream then  
I should be king.—My son, the Saints  
are virgins ;

They love the white rose of virginity,  
The cold, white lily blowing in her  
cell :

I have been myself a virgin ; and I  
swear

To consecrate my virgin here to  
heaven—

The silent, cloister'd, solitary life,  
A life of life-long prayer against the  
curse

That lies on thee and England.

Har. No, no, no.

Edw. Treble denial of the tongue  
of flesh, [have

Like Peter's when he fell, and thou wilt  
To wait for it like Peter. O my son !

Are all oaths to be broken then, all  
promises [heaven ?

Made in our agony for help from  
Son, there is one who loves thee : and a  
wife,

What matters who, so she be serviceable  
In all obedience, as mine own hath  
been :

God bless thee, wedded daughter.

[Laying his hand on the Queen's head.  
Queen. Bless thou too

That brother whom I love beyond the  
My banish'd Tostig. [rest,

Edw. All the sweet saints bless him !  
Spare and forbear him, Harold, if he  
comes ! [me, Harold !

And let him pass unscathed ; he loves  
Be kindly to the Normans left among  
us, [son, swear

Who follow'd me for love ! and dear  
When thou art king, to see my solemn  
Accomplish'd ! [vow

Har. Nay, dear lord, for I have sworn  
Not to swear falsely twice.

Edw. Thou wilt not swear ?

Har. I cannot. [curse,

Edw. Then on thee remains the  
Harold, if thou embrace her : and on  
Edith, if thou abide it,— [thee

[The King swoons ; Edith falls and  
kneels by the couch.

Stig. He hath swoon'd !  
Death ? . . . no, as yet a breath.

Har. Look up ! look up !

Edith !

Aldred. Confuse her not ; she hath  
begun

Her life-long prayer for thee.

Ald. O noble Harold,  
I would thou couldst have sworn.

Har. For thine own pleasure ?

Ald. No, but to please our dying  
king, and those [England. Earl.

Who make thy good their own—all  
Aldred. I would thou couldst have  
sworn. Our holy king [Church

Hath given his virgin lamb to Holy  
To save thee from the curse.

Har. Alas ! poor man,  
His promise brought it on me.

Aldred. O good son !  
That knowledge made him all the care—  
fuller [might glance

To find a means whereby the curse  
From thee and England.

Har. Father, we so loved—  
Aldred. The more the love, the  
mightier is the prayer ;

The more the love, the more acceptable  
The sacrifice of both your loves to  
heaven. [heaven ;

No sacrifice to heaven, no help from  
That runs thro' all the faiths of all the  
world.

And sacrifice there must be, for the  
king

Is holy, and hath talk'd with God, and  
seen [heaven—

A shadowing horror ; there are signs in  
Har. Your comet came and went.

Aldred. And signs on earth !  
Knowest thou Senlac hill ?

Har. I know all Sussex ;  
A good entrenchment for a perilous  
hour ! [denly ! There is one

Aldred. Pray God that come not sud-  
Who passing by that hill three nights  
ago— [with it—

He shook so that he scarce could out  
Heard, heard—

Har. The wind in his hair ?  
Aldred. A ghostly horn

Blowing continually, and faint battle-  
hymns, [of men ;

And cries, and clashes, and the groans  
And dreadful shadows strove upon the  
hill, [the marsh—

And dreadful lights crept up from out  
Corp e-candles gliding over nameless  
graves—

Har. At Senlac ?

Aldred. Senlac.

Edw. (waking). Senlac ! Sanguelac,  
The Lake of Blood !

Stig. This lightning before death  
Plays on the word,—and Normanizes  
too !

Har. Hush, father, hush !

Edw. Thou uncanonical fool,  
Wilt thou play with the thunder ? North  
and South [are blown

Thunder together, showers of blood  
Before a never-ending blast, and hiss

Against the blaze they cannot quench  
—a lake,

A sea of blood—we are drown'd in blood  
—for God

Has fill'd the quiver, and Death has  
drawn the bow—

Sanguelac! Sanguelac! the arrow! the  
arrow! [Dies.

Stig. It is the arrow of death in his  
own heart— [thee King.

And our great Council wait to crown

SCENE II.—*In the Garden. The King's  
House near London.*

Edith. Crown'd, crown'd and lost,  
crown'd King—and lost to me!

*Singing.*

*Two young lovers in winter weather,  
None to guide them,*

*Walk'd at night on the misty heather,  
Night, as black as a raven's feather;*

*Both were lost and found together,  
None beside them.*

That is the burthen of it—lost and  
found

Together in the cruel river Swale  
A hundred years ago; and there's an-  
other,

*Lost, lost, the light of day,*

To which the lover answers lovingly

*"I am beside thee."*

*Lost, lost, we have lost the way.*

*"Love, I will guide thee."*

*Whither, O whither? into the river,*

*Where we two may be lost together,*

*And lost for ever? "Oh! never, oh!  
never,*

*Tho' we be lost and be found together."*

Some think they loved within the pale  
forbidden [the truth

By Holy Church: but who shall say?

Was lost in that fierce North, where  
they were lost, [Tostig lost

Where all good things are lost, where  
The good hearts of his people. It is  
Harold!

*Enter Harold.*

Harold the King!

Har. Call me not King, but Harold.

Edith. Nay, thou art King!

Har. Thine, thine, or King or churl!

My girl, thou hast been weeping: turn  
not thou

Thy face away, but rather let me be

King of the moment to thee, and com-  
mand [will make

That kiss my due when subject, which  
My Kingship kinglier to me than to  
reign

King of the world without it.

Edith. Ask me not,

Lest I should yield it, and the second  
curse [only

Descend upon thine head, and thou be  
King of the moment over England.

Har. Edith,

Tho' somewhat less a king to my true  
self

Than ere they crown'd me one, for I  
have lost

Somewhat of upright stature thro' mine  
oath, [thou

Yet thee I would not lose, and sell not  
Our living passion for a dead man's  
dream; [spake.

Stigand believed he knew not what he  
Oh God! I cannot help it, but at times

They seem to me too narrow, all the  
faiths [eye

Of this grown world of ours, whose baby  
Saw them sufficient. Fool and wise, I  
fear [light!—

This curse, and scorn it. But a little  
And on it falls the shadow of the priest;

Heaven yield us more! for better, Woden,  
all [Waihalla,

Our cancell'd warrior-gods, our grim  
Eternal war, than that the Saints at  
peace [be

The Holiest of our Holiest one should  
This William's fellow tricksters;—bet-  
ter die [else

Than credit this, for death is death, or  
Lifts us beyond the lie. Kiss me—thou  
art not

A holy sister yet, my girl, to fear  
There might be more than brother in  
my kiss,

And more than sister in thine own.

Edith. I dare not.

Har. Scared by the church—"Love  
for a whole life long"

When was that sung?

Edith. Here to the nightingales.

Har. Their anthems of no church,  
how sweet they are! [cross

Nor kingly priest, nor priestly king to  
Their billings ere they nest.

Edith. They are but of spring,

They fly the winter change—not so  
with us—

No wings to come and go.

Har. But wing'd souls flying

Beyond all change and in the eternal  
distance

To settle on the Truth.

Edith. They are not so true,

They change their mates.

Har. Do they? I did not know it.

Edith. They say thou art to wed the  
Lady Aldwyth.

Har. They say, they say.

Edith. If this be politic,

And well for thee and England—and for  
Care not for me who love thee. [her—

Gurth (calling). Harold, Harold!

Har. The voice of Gurth! (Enter  
Gurth.) Good even, my good brother!

Gurth. Good even, gentle Edith.

Edith. Good even, Gurth.

Gurth. Ill news hath come! Our  
hapless brother, Tostig—

He, and the giant King of Norway, Har-  
old

Hardrada—Scotland, Ireland, Iceland,  
Orkney,

Are landed North of Humber, and in a  
field

So packt with carnage that the dykes  
and brooks [have overthrown  
Were bridged and damm'd with dead,  
Morcar and Edwin.

*Har.* Well then, we must fight.  
How blows the wind?

*Gurth.* Against St. Valery  
And William.

*Har.* Well then, we will to the North.

*Gurth.* Ay, but worse news; this  
William sent to Rome, [Saints:  
Swearing thou swarest falsely by his  
The Pope and that Archdeacon Hilde-  
brand [him back

His master, heard him, and have sent  
A holy gonfalon, and a blessed hair  
Of Peter, and all France, all Burgundy,  
Poitou, all Christendom is raised  
against thee; [fight for thee,  
He hath cursed thee, and all those who  
And given thy realm of England to the

bastard  
*Har.* Ha! ha!  
*Edith.* Oh! laugh not! . . . Strange  
and ghastly in the gloom [cloud  
And shadowing of this double thunder-  
That lours on England—laughter!

*Har.* No, not strange!  
This was old human laughter in old  
Rome [which reign'd  
Before a Pope was born, when that  
Call'd itself God.—A kindly rendering  
Of 'Render unto Cæsar.' . . . The Good  
Shepherd!

Take this, and render that.  
*Gurth.* They have taken York.  
*Har.* The Lord was God and came  
as man—the Pope

Is man and comes as God.—York taken?  
*Gurth.* Yea,  
Tostig hath taken York!

*Har.* To York then. Edith,  
Hadst thou been braver, I had better  
braved [that  
All—but I love thee and thou me—and  
Remains beyond all chances and all  
And that thou knowest. [churches,  
*Edith.* Ay, but take back thy ring.  
It burns my hand—a curse to thee and  
I dare not wear it. [me.  
[*Proffers Harold the ring, which he*  
*takes.*

*Har.* But I dare. God with thee!  
[*Exeunt Harold and Gurth.*

*Edith.* The King hath cursed him,  
if he marry me; [or no!  
The Pope hath cursed him, marry me  
God help me! I know nothing—can  
but pray [but prayer,  
For Harold—pray, pray, pray—no help  
A breath that fleets beyond this iron  
world,  
And touches Him that made it.

—  
ACT IV.

SCENE I. — In Northumbria. Arch-  
bishop Aldred, Morcar, Edwin, and  
Forces.

*Enter Harold. The standard of the  
golden Dragon of Wessex preced-  
ing him.*

*Har.* What! are thy people sullen  
from defeat? [Humber,  
Our Wessex dragon flies beyond the  
No voice to greet it.

*Edwin.* Let not our great king  
Believe us sullen—only shamed to the  
quick [bruised

Before the king—as having been so  
By Harold, king of Norway; but our  
help [us, thou!

Is Harold king of England. Pardon  
Our silence is our reverence for the  
king! [truth be gall,

*Har.* Earl of the Mercians! if the  
Cram me not thou with honey, when  
our good hive  
Needs every sting to save it.

*Voices.* Aldwyth! Aldwyth!  
*Har.* Why cry thy people on thy  
sister's name. [thro' her beauty,  
*Mor.* She hath won upon our people  
And pleasantness among them.

*Voices.* Aldwyth, Aldwyth!  
*Har.* They shout as they would  
have her for a queen.

*Mor.* She hath followed with our  
host, and suffer'd all.

*Har.* What would ye, men?  
*Voice.* Our old Northumbrian crown,  
And kings of our own choosing.

*Har.* Your old crown  
Were little help without our Saxon  
Against Hardrada. [carles

*Voice.* Little! we are Danes,  
Who conquer'd what we walk on, our  
own field.

*Har.* They have been plotting here!  
[*Aside.*

*Voice.* He calls us little!  
*Har.* The kingdoms of this world  
began with little, [hand

A hill, a fort, a city—that reach'd a  
Down to the field beneath it, 'Be thou  
mine,' [field

Then to the next, 'Thou also—' if the  
Cried out 'I am mine own;' another  
hill

Or fort, or city, took it, and the first  
Fell, and the next became an Empire.

*Voice.* Yet  
Thou art but a West Saxon; we are  
Danes! [English;

*Har.* My mother is a Dane and I am  
There is a pleasant fable in old books,  
Ye take a stick, and break it; bind a  
score

All in one faggot, snap it over knee,  
Ye cannot. [true!

*Voice.* Hear King Harold! he says  
*Har.* Would ye be Norsemen?  
*Voices.* No!

*Har.* Or Norman?  
*Voices.* No!

*Har.* Snap not the faggot-band then.  
*Voice.* That is true!

*Voice.* Ay, but thou art not kingly  
only grandson

To Wulfnoth, a poor cow-herd.

*Har.* This old Wulfnoth  
Would take me on his knees and tell  
me tales

Of Alfred and of Athelstan the Great  
Who drove you Danes; and yet he  
held that Dane,

[all  
Jute, Angle, Saxon, were or should be  
One England, for this cow-herd, like  
my father,

[the throne,  
Who shook the Norman scoundrels off  
Had in him kingly thoughts—a king of  
men,

Not made but born, like the great king  
A light among the oxen. [of all,  
Voice. That is true!

Voice. Ay, and I love him now, for  
mine own father  
Was great, and cobbled.

Voice. Thou art Tostig's brother,  
Who wastes the land.

*Har.* This brother comes to save  
Your land from waste; I saved it once  
before,

[hence,  
For when your people banish'd Tostig  
And Edward would have sent a host  
against you,

[king  
Then I, who loved my brother, bade the  
Who doted on him sanction your de-  
cree

Of Tostig's banishment, and choice of  
Morcar,

To help the realm from scattering.  
Voice. King! thy brother,

If one may dare to speak the truth,  
was wrong'd, [against him  
Wild was he, born so: but the plots  
Had madden'd tamer men.

*Mor.* Thou art one of those  
Who brake into Lord Tostig's treasure-  
house

And slew two hundred of his following,  
And now, when Tostig hath come back  
with power,

Are frightened back to Tostig.  
Old Thane. Ugh! Plots and feuds!

This is my ninetieth birthday. Can ye  
not Alfgar,  
Be brethren? Godwin still at feud with  
And Alfgar hates King Harold. Plots  
and feuds!

This is my ninetieth birthday!  
*Har.* Old man, Harold  
Hates nothing; not his fault, if our two  
Be less than brothers.

[houses  
Voices. Aldwyth, Harold, Aldwyth!  
*Har.* Again: Morcar! Edwin!

What do they mean?  
*Edwin.* So the good king would  
deign to lend an ear [perchance—  
Not overscornful, we might chance—  
To guess their meaning.

*Mor.* Thine own meaning, Harold,  
To make all England one, to close all  
feuds,

[may rise  
Mixing our bloods, that thence a king  
Half-Godwin and half Alfgar, one to  
rule

All England beyond question, beyond  
quarrel.

*Har.* Who sow'd this fancy here  
among the people?

*Mor.* Who knows what sows itself  
among the people?  
A goodly flower at times.

*Har.* The Queen of Wales!  
Why, Morcar, it is all but duty in her  
To hate me; I have heard she hates  
me.

*Mor.* No!  
For I can swear to that, but cannot  
swear [Norsemen,  
That these will follow thee against the  
If thou deny them this.

*Har.* Morcar and Edwin.  
When will ye cease to plot against my  
house? [that we, who know  
*Edwin.* The king can scarcely dream  
His prowess in the mountains of the  
West,

[North.  
Should care to plot against him in the  
*Har.* Who dares arraign us, king, of  
such a plot?

[now  
*Har.* Ye heard one witness even  
*Har.* The craven!  
There is a faction risen again for Tos-  
tig,

Since Tostig came with Norway—fright  
not love. [yield,  
*Har.* Morcar and Edwin, will ye, if I  
Follow against the Norsemen?

*Har.* Surely surely!  
*Har.* Morcar and Edwin, will ye  
upon oath,

Help us against the Norman?  
*Har.* With good will;  
Yea, take the Sacrament upon it, king.

*Har.* Where is thy sister?  
*Har.* Somewhere hard at hand,  
Call and she comes.

[One goes out, then enter Aldwyth.  
*Har.* I doubt not but thou knowest  
Why thou art summon'd.

*Ald.* Why?—I stay with those,  
Lest thy fierce Tostig spy me out alone,  
And slay me all alive.

*Har.* Canst thou love one  
Who did discrown thine husband, un-  
queen thee?  
Didst thou not love thine husband?

*Ald.* Oh! my lord,  
The nimble, wild, red, wiry, savage  
king—  
That was, my lord, a match of policy.

*Har.* Was it?  
I knew him brave; he loved his land:  
he fain

Had made her great: his finger on her  
harp  
(I heard him more than once) had in it  
Wales,

[been his,  
Her floods, her woods, her hills: had I  
I had been all Welsh.

*Ald.* Oh, ay—all Welsh—and yet  
I saw thee drive him up his hills—and  
women [more;  
Cling to the conquer'd if they love, the  
If not, they cannot hate the conqueror.

We never—oh! good Morcar, speak for  
His conqueror conquer'd Aldwyth. [us,

*Har.* Goodly news !  
*Mor.* Doubt it not thou ! Since Grif-  
 fyth's head was sent  
 To Edward, she hath said it.

*Har.* I had rather  
 She would have loved her husband.

*Aldwyth.* Aldwyth, [where I love ?  
 Canst thou love me, thou knowing

*Ald.* I can, my lord, for mine own  
 sake, for thine, [who flutters  
 For England, for thy poor white dove,  
 Between thee and the porch, but then  
 would find

Her nest within the cloister, and be  
 still.

*Har.* Canst thou love one, who can-  
 not love again ? [answer love.

*Ald.* Full hope have I that love will

*Har.* Then in the name of the great  
 God, so be it ! [the hosts,

Come, Aldred, join our hands before  
 That all may see.

[Aldred joins the hands of Harold  
 and Aldwyth and blesses them.

*Voices.* Harold, Harold and Aldwyth !

*Har.* Set forth our golden Dragon,  
 let him flap

The wings that beat down Wales !  
 Advance our Standard of the Warrior,  
 Dark among gems and gold ; and thou,

brave banner,  
 Blaze like a night of fatal stars on  
 those

Who read their doom and die.  
 Where lie the Norsemen ? on the Der-  
 went ? ay

At Stamford-bridge.  
*Morcar,* collect thy men ; Edwin, my  
 friend—

Thou lingerest.—Gurth,—  
 Last night King Edward came to me  
 in dreams—

The rosy face and long down-silvering  
 beard—

He told me I should conquer :—  
 I am no woman to put faith in dreams.

(To his army.)

Last night King Edward came to me  
 in dreams,

And told me we should conquer.  
*Voices.* Forward ! Forward !  
 Harold and Holy Cross !

*Ald.* The day is won !

SCENE II.—A Plain. Before the  
 Battle of Stamford-bridge. Harold  
 and his Guard.

*Har.* Who is it comes this way ?  
*Tostig* ? (Enter Tostig with a small  
 force.) O brother,

What art thou doing here ?  
*Tostig.* I am foraging  
 For Norway's army.

*Har.* I could take and slay thee.  
 Thou art in arms against us.

*Tostig.* Take and slay me,  
 For Edward loved me.

*Har.* Edward bade me spare thee.

*Tostig.* I hate King Edward for he  
 join'd with thee [me, I say,  
 To drive me outlaw'd. Take and slay  
 Or I shall count thee fool.

*Har.* Take thee, or free thee,  
 Free thee or slay thee, Norway will  
 have war ; [for Norway.

No man would strike with Tostig, save  
 Thou art nothing in thine England,  
 save for Norway [thou here,

Who loves not thee but war. What dost  
 Trampling thy mother's bosom into  
 blood ? [with such bitterness.

*Tostig.* She hath wean'd me from it  
 I come for mine own Earldom, my  
 Northumbria ; [house.

Thou hast given it to the enemy of our  
*Har.* Northumbria threw thee off,  
 she will not have thee, [ing crime!

Thou hast misused her : and, O crown-  
 Hast murder'd thine own guest, the son  
 Gamel, at thine own hearth. [of Orm,

*Tostig.* The slow, fat fool !  
 He drawl'd and prated so, I smote him  
 I knew not what I did. [suddenly,

*Har.* Come back to us,  
 Know what thou dost, and we may find  
 for thee,

So thou be chasten'd by thy banish-  
 ment,  
 Some easier Earldom.

*Tostig.* What for Norway then ?  
 He looks for land among you, he and  
 his.

*Har.* Seven feet of English land, or  
 Seeing he is a giant, [something more,

*Tostig.* O brother, brother,  
 O Harold—

*Har.* Nay, then come thou back to us !  
*Tostig.* Never shall any man say that  
 I, that Tostig [North

Conjured the mightier Harold from his  
 To do the battle for me here in England,  
 Then left him for the meaner ! thee !—  
 Thou has no passion for the House of  
 Godwin—king—

Thou hast but cared to make thyself a  
 Thou hast sold me for a cry.—  
 Thou gavest thy voice against me in  
 Council— [thee.

I hate thee, and despise thee, and defy  
 Farewell for ever ! [Exit.

*Har.* On to Stamford-bridge.

SCENE III.—After the battle of Stam-  
 ford-bridge. Banquet. Harold and  
 Aldwyth. Gurth, Leofwin, Morcar,  
 Edwin, and other Earls and Thanes.

*Voices.* Hail ! Harold ! Aldwyth !  
 hail, bridegroom and bride !  
*Aldwyth* (talking with Harold).

Answer them thou ! [the wines  
 Is this our marriage-banquet ? Would  
 Of wedding had been dash'd into the  
 cups [glory

Of victory, and our marriage and thy  
 Been drunk together ! these poor hands  
 but sew, [man's to have held  
 Spin, broider—would that they were  
 The battle-axe by thee !

*Har.* There was a moment  
When being forced aloof from all my  
guard, [men  
And striking at Hardrada and his mad-  
I had wish'd for any weapon.

*Ald.* Why art thou sad ?

*Har.* I have lost the boy who play'd  
at ball with me, [this  
With whom I fought another fight than  
Of Stamford-bridge.

*Ald.* Ay ! ay ! thy victories  
Over our own poor Wales, when at thy  
He conquer'd with thee. [side

*Har.* No—the childish fist  
That cannot strike again.

*Ald.* Thou art too kindly.  
Why didst thou let so many Norsemen  
hence ? [pirate hides

Thy fierce forekings had clench'd their  
To the bleak church doors, like kites  
upon a barn. [thee why ?

*Har.* Is there so great a need to tell

*Ald.* Yea, am I not thy wife ?

*Voices.* Hail, Harold, Aldwyth !  
Bridegroom and bride !

*Ald.* Answer them ! [To Harold.]

*Harold* [To all]. Earls and Thanes !  
Full thanks for your fair greeting of  
my bride ! [the day,

Earls, Thanes, and all our countrymen !  
Our day beside the Derwent will not  
shine [hours

Less than a star among the goldenest  
Of Alfred, or of Edward his great son,  
Or Athelstan, or English Ironside

Who fought with Knut, or Knut who  
coming Dane [king

Died English. Every man about his  
Fought like a king ; the king like his  
own man,

No better ; one for all, and all for one,  
One soul ! and therefore have we shat-  
ter'd back [yet

The hugest wave from Norseland ever  
Surged on us, and our battle-axes  
broken

The Raven's wing, and dumb'd his car-  
rion croak [gone—

From the gray sea for ever. Many are  
Drink to the dead who died for us, the  
living [happier lived,

Who fought and would have died, but  
If happier be to live ; they both have  
life [voice

In the large mouth of England, till her  
Die with the world. Hail—hail !

*Har.* May all invaders perish like  
Hardrada ! [but Harold.

All traitors fall like Tostig ! [All drink.

*Ald.* Thy cup's full !

*Har.* I saw the hand of Tostig cover  
it. [him

Our dear, dead, traitor-brother, Tostig,  
Reverently we buried. Friends, had I  
been here, [hold

Without too large self-landing I must  
The sequel had been other than his  
league

With Norway, and this battle. Peace  
be with him !

He was not of the worst. If there be  
those [me—

At banquet in this hall, and hearing  
For there be those I fear who prick'd  
the lion [ish blood

To make him spring, that sight of Dan-  
Might serve an end not English—peace  
be with them [what

Likewise, if they can be at peace with  
God gave us to divide us from the wolf !

*Ald.* [aside to Harold]. Make not our  
Morcar sullen : it is not wise.

*Har.* Hail to the living who fought !,  
the dead who fell !

*Voices.* Hail, hail !

1 *Thane.* How ran that answer  
which King Harold gave

To his dead namesake, when he ask'd  
for England ?

*Leaf.* 'Seven feet of English earth,  
or something more,  
Seeing he is a giant !'

1 *Thane.* Then for the bastard  
Six feet and nothing more !

*Leaf.* Ay, but belike

Thou hast not learnt his measure.

1 *Thane.* By St. Edmund

I over-measure him. Sound sleep to the  
man [dawn !

Here by dead Norway without dream or

2 *Thane.* What, is he bragging still  
that he will come [under him ?

To thrust our Harold's throne from  
My nurse would tell me of a molehill  
crying [for me !

To a mountain 'Stand aside and room

1 *Thane.* Let him come ! let him  
come. Here's to him, sink or swim !

[Drinks.

2 *Thane.* God sink him !

1 *Thane.* Cannot hands which had  
the strength [shores,

To shove that stranded iceberg off our  
And send the shattered North again to  
sea, [nanburg

Scuttle his cockle-shell ? What's Bru-  
To Stamford-bridge ? a war-crash, and  
so hard, [Thor—

So loud, that, by St. Dunstan, old St.  
By God, we thought him dead—but our  
old Thor [and came

Heard his own thunder again, and woke  
Among us again, and mark'd the sons of  
those [the North :

Who made this Britain England, break

Mark'd how the war-axe swang,  
Heard how the war-horn sang

Mark'd how the spear-head sprang,  
Heard how the shield-wall rang,

Iron on iron clang,  
Anvil on hammer bang—

2 *Thane.* Hammer on anvil, hammer  
on anvil. Old dog.

Thou art drunk, old dog ! [thee !

1 *Thane.* Too drunk to fight with

2 *Thane.* Fight thou with thine own  
double, not with me,

Keep that for Norman William !

- 1 *Thane.* Down with William !  
 3 *Thane.* The washerwoman's brat !  
 4 *Thane.* The tanner's bastard !  
 5 *Thane.* The Falaise byblow !

*Enter a Thane, from Pevensey, spatter'd with mud.*

*Har.* Ay, but what late guest,  
 As haggard as a fast of forty days,  
 And caked and plaster'd with a hundred mires,  
 Hath stumbled on our cups ?

*Thane from Pevensey.* My lord the King !  
 [changed—  
 William the Norman, for the wind had

*Har.* I felt it in the middle of that fierce fight  
 [landed, ha ?

At Stamford-bridge. William hath  
*Thane from Pevensey.* Landed at

Pevensey—I am from Pevensey—  
 Hath wasted all the land at Pevensey—

Hath harried mine own cattle—God  
 confound him !  
 [ensey—

I have ridden night and day from Pev-  
 A thousand ships, a hundred thousand  
 men—

Thousands of horses, like as many lions  
 Neighing and roaring as they leapt to  
 land—  
 [broken bread ?

*Har.* How oft in coming hast thou  
*Thane from Pevensey.* Some thrice,  
 or so.

*Har.* Bring not thy hollowness  
 On our full feast. Famine's fear, were  
 it but  
 [and eat,

Of being starved. Sit down, sit down  
 And, when again red-blooded, speak  
 again ;  
 [Aside.

The men that guarded England to the  
 South  
 [power mine

Were scattered to the harvest . . . No  
 To hold their force together . . . Many  
 are fallen  
 [stupid-sure

At Stamford-bridge . . . . . the people  
 Sleep like their swine . . in South and  
 I could not be.  
 [North at once

[Aloud.  
 Gurth, Leofwin, Morcar, Edwin !  
 (*Pointing to revellers.*) The curse of

England ! these are drowned in  
 wassail,  
 [their wines !

And cannot see the world but thro'  
 Leave them ! and thee too, Aldwyth,  
 must I leave—  
 [moon !

Harsh is the news ! hard is our honey-  
 Thy pardon. (*Turning round to his*  
*attendants.*) Break the banquet  
 up . . . Ye four !  
 [news,

And thou, my carrier-pigeon of black  
 Cram thy crop full, but come when  
 thou art call'd.  
 [Exit Harold.

#### ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A tent on a mound, from which can be seen the field of Senlac. Harold, sitting; by him standing Hugh Margot the Monk, Gurth, Leofwin.*

*Har.* Refer my cause, my crown to  
 Rome ! . . . The wolf [all.

Mudded the brook, and predetermined  
 Monk,  
 [stant 'No'

Thou hast said thy say, and had my con-  
 For all but instant battle. I hear no  
 more.  
 [time. Arise,

*Har.* Hear me again for the last  
 Scatter thy people home, descend the  
 hill.

Lay hands of full allegiance in thy  
 Lord's

And crave his mercy for the Holy Fa-  
 ther  
 [the Norman.

Hath given this realm of England to  
*Har.* Then for the last time, monk,  
 I ask again  
 [Father

When had the Lateran and the Holy  
 To do with England's choice of her  
 own king ?  
 [drew to the East

*Har.* Earl, the first Christian Cæsar  
 To leave the Pope dominion in the  
 West,  
 [West.

He gave him all the kingdoms of the  
*Har.* So !—did he ?—Earl—I have a  
 mind to play  
 [thy tongue.

The William with thine eyesight and  
 Earl—ay—thou art but a messenger of  
 William.  
 [with thee !

I am weary—go: make me not wroth  
*Har.* Mock-king, I am the messenger  
 of God,  
 [Tekel !

His Norman Daniel ! Mene, Mene,  
 Is thy wrath Hell, that I should spare  
 to cry,

Yon Heaven is wroth with thee ? Hear  
 me again !

Our Saints have moved the Church that  
 moves the world,  
 [heard—

And all the Heavens and very God: they  
 They know King Edward's promise and  
 thine—thine.

*Har.* Should they not know free  
 England crowns herself ? [promise ?

Not know that he nor I had power to  
 Not know that Edward cancell'd his  
 own promise ?  
 [juggler, (*rising*)

And for my part therein—Back to that  
 Tell him the Saints are nobler than he  
 dreams,  
 [Saints,

Tell him that God is nobler than the  
 And tell him we stand armed on Senlac  
 And bide the doom of God.  
 [Hill,

*Har.* . . . Hear it thro' me.  
 The realm for which thou art forsworn  
 is cursed,  
 [is cursed,

The babe enwomb'd and at the breast  
 Tns corpse thou wheldest with thine,  
 earth is cursed,  
 [cursed,

The soul who fighteth on thy side is  
 The seed thou sowest in thy field is  
 cursed,  
 [field is cursed,

The steer wherewith thou plowest thy  
 The fowl that fleeth o'er thy field is  
 And thou, usurper, liar—  
 [cursed,

*Har.* Out, beast monk !  
 [*Lifting his hand to strike him.* Gurth  
 stops the blow.

I ever hated monks.

*Har.* I am but a voice

Among you : murder, martyr me if ye will— [silent, selfless man]

Har. Thanks, Gurth! The simple  
Is worth a world of tonguesters. (To  
Margot.) Get thee gone!

He means the thing he says. See him  
out safe! [as fire with curses,

Leof. He hath blown himself as red  
An honest fool! Follow me, honest  
fool, [folk,

But if thou blurt thy curse among our  
I know not—I may give that egg-bald  
The tap that silences. [head

Har. See him out safe.  
[Exeunt Leofwin and Margot.

Gurth. Thou hast lost thine even  
temper, brother Harold!

Har. Gurth, when I past by Wal-  
tham, my foundation [themselves,  
For men who serve their neighbor, not  
I cast me down prone, praying; and,  
when I rose, [lean'd

They told me that the Holy Rood had  
And bow'd above me; whether that  
which held it [bound

Had weaken'd, and the Rood itself were  
To that necessity which binds us down;  
Whether it bow'd at all but in their  
fancy;

Or if it bow'd, whether its symbol'd ruin  
Or glory, who shall tell? but they were  
And somewhat sadden'd me. [sad

Gurth. Yet if a fear,  
Or shadow of a fear, lest the strange  
Saints [power to balk

By whom thou swarest, should have  
Thy puissance in this fight with him,  
who made [not sworn—

And heard thee swear—brother—I have  
If the king fall, may not the kingdom  
fall?

But if I fall, I fall, and thou art king;  
And, if I win, I win, and thou art king;  
Draw thou to London, there make  
strength to breast [me.

Whatever chance, but leave this day to  
Leof. (entering). And waste the land  
about thee as thou goest,

And be thy hand as winter on the field,  
To leave the foe no forage.

Har. Noble Gurth!  
Best son of Godwin! If I fall, I fall—  
The doom of God! How should the  
people fight [thou mad?

When the king flies? And, Leofwin, art  
How should the King of England waste  
the fields [glance yet

Of England, his own people?—No  
Of the Northumbrian helmet on the  
heath? [the heath,

Leof. No, but a shoal of wives upon  
And some one saw thy willy-nilly nun  
Vying a tress against our golden fern.

Har. Vying a tear with our cold  
dews, a sigh [her be fetch'd.

With these low-moaning heavens. Let  
We have parted from our wife without  
reproach, [tices;

Tho' we have dived thro' all her prac-  
And that is well.

Leof. I saw her even now:  
She hath not left us.

Har. Nought of Morcar then?  
Gurth. Nor seen, nor heard; thine,  
William's or his own

As wind blows, or tide flows: belike  
he watches,  
If this war-storm in one of its rough  
rolls [land-

Wash up that old crown of Northumber-  
Har. I married her for Morcar—a  
sin against [seems,

The truth of love. Evil for good, it  
Is oft as childless of the good as evil  
For evil. [times

Leof. Good for good hath borne at  
A bastard false as William.

Har. Ay, if Wisdom  
Pair'd not with Good. But I am some-  
what worn, [God.

A snatch of sleep were like the peace of  
Gurth, Leofwin, go once more about the  
hill— [lac,

What did the dead man call it—Sangu-  
The lake of blood?

Leof. A lake that dips in William  
As well as Harold.

Har. Like enough. I have seen  
The trenches dug, the palisades un-  
rear'd [wands;

And wattled thick with ash and willow-  
Yea, wrought at them myself. Go round  
once more; [man horse

See all be sound and whole. No Nor-  
Can shatter England, standing shield  
Tell that again to all. [by shield;

Gurth. I will, good brother.

Har. Our guardsman hath but toil'd  
his hand and foot;

I hand, foot, heart and head. Some  
wine! (One pours wine into a gob-  
let, which he hands to Harold.)

Too much!  
What? we must use our battle-axe to-  
day. [we came in?

Our guardsmen have slept well, since  
Leof. Ay, slept and snored. Your  
second-sighted man [king,

That scared the dying conscience of the  
Misheard their snores for groans. They  
are up again [burg

And chanting that old song of Brunan-  
Where England conquer'd.

Har. That is well. The Norman,  
What is he doing?

Leof. Praying for Normandy;  
Our scouts have heard the tinkle of their  
bells. [for England too!

Har. And our old songs are prayers  
But by all Saints—

Leof. Barring the Norman!  
Har. Nay.

Were the great trumpet blowing dooms-  
day dawn, [man moves—

I needs must rest. Call when the Nor-  
[Exeunt all, but Harold.

No horse—thousands of horses—our  
shield wall—

Wall—break it not—break not—  
break— [Sleeps.

*Vision of Edw.* Son Harold, I thy king, who came before [ford-bridge  
To tell thee thou should'st win at Stain—  
Come yet once more, from where I am  
at peace,

Because I loved thee in my mortal day,  
To tell thee thou shalt die on Senlac  
Sanguelac! [hill—

*Vision of Wulf.* O brother, from my  
ghastly oubliette [seas—  
I send my voice across the narrow  
No more, no more, dear brother, never—  
Sanguelac! [more—

*Vision of Tostig.* O brother, most  
unbrotherlike to me, [life,  
Thou gavest thy voice against me in my  
I give my voice against thee from the  
Sanguelac! [grave—

*Vision of Norman Saints.* O hapless  
Harold! King but for an hour!  
Thou swarest falsely by our blessed  
bones, [heaven!]

We give our voice against thee out of  
Sanguelac! Sanguelac! The arrow, the  
arrow!

*Har.* (starting up battle-axe in hand).

Away!  
My battle-axe against your voices.  
Peace! [shall die—  
The king's last word—'the arrow!' I  
I die for England then, who lived for  
England—

What nobler? men must die.  
I cannot fall into a falser world—  
I have done no man wrong. Tostig,  
Art thou so anger'd? [poor brother,  
Fain had I kept thine earldom in thy  
hands [wrench'd  
Save for thy wild and violent will that  
All hearts of freemen from thee. I could  
do

No other than this way advise the king  
Against the race of Godwin. Is it possible  
[earthly hates  
That mortal men should bear their  
Into yon bloodless world, and threaten  
us thence [art revenged—  
Unschool'd of Death! Thus then thou  
I left our England naked to the South  
To meet thee in the North. The Norse-  
man's raid [of Godwin  
Hath helpt the Norman, and the race  
Hath ruin'd Godwin. No—our waking  
thoughts [pools  
Suffer a stormless shipwreck in the  
Of sullen slumber, and arise again  
Disjointed: only dreams—where mine  
own self [a spark

Takes part against myself! Why? For  
Of self-disdain born in me when I swear  
Falsely to him, the falser Norman, over  
His gilded ark of mummy-saints, by  
whom

I knew not that I swear,—not for my  
For England—yet not wholly— [self—

*Enter Edith.*

*Edith.* Edith,  
Get thou into my cloister as the king

Will'd it: be safe: the perjury-monger-  
ing Count

Hath made too good an use of Holy  
Church

To break her close! There the great  
God of truth [ing devil

Fill all thine hours with peace!—A ly-  
Hath haunted me—mine oath—my wife  
—I fain [could not:

Had made my marriage not a lie; I  
Thou art my bride! and thou in after  
years [mine

Praying perchance for this poor soul of  
In cold, white cells beneath an icy  
moon— [England,

This memory to thee!—and this to  
My legacy of war against the Pope  
From child to child, from Pope to  
Pope, from age to age, [shores,  
Till the sea wash her level with her  
Or till the Pope be Christ's.

*Enter Aldwyth.*

*Ald.* (to Edith). Away from him!

*Edith.* I will... I have not spoken  
to the king  
One word; and one I must. Farewell!

*Har.* [Going.  
Not yet.

*Edith.* To what use?  
*Har.* The king commands thee,  
woman!

(To Aldwyth.)

Have thy two brethren sent their  
forces in?

*Ald.* Nay, I fear not.

*Har.* Then there's no force in thee!  
Thou didst possess thyself of Edward's  
ear [loved!]

To part me from the woman that I  
Thou didst arouse the fierce Northum-  
brians! [to me!—

Thou hast been false to England and  
As... in some sort... I have been  
false to thee. [sides—Go!

Leave me. No more—Pardon on both  
*Ald.* Alas, my lord, I loved thee.

*Har.* (bitterly). With a love  
Passing thy love for Griffrith! where-  
fore now [Go!

Obey my first and last commandment.  
*Ald.* O Harold! husband! Shall we  
meet again? [tle. Go.

*Har.* After the battle—after the bat-  
*Ald.* I go. (Aside.) That I could  
stab her standing there!

[Exit Aldwyth.

*Edith.* Alas, my lord, she loved thee.

*Har.* Never! never!

*Edith.* I saw it in her eyes!

*Har.* I see it in thine.

And not on thee—nor England—fall  
God's doom!

*Edith.* On thee? on me. And thou  
art England! Alfred [England  
Was England. Ethelred was nothing.  
Is but her king, and thou art Harold!

*Har.* Edith,

The sign in heaven—the sudden blast  
at sea— [dark dreams—

My fatal oath—the dead Saints—the  
The Pope's Anathema—the Holy Rood  
That bow'd to me at Waltham—Edith,  
if

I, the last English King of England—

Edith. No,

First of a line that coming from the  
people,

And chosen by the people—

Har. And fighting for

And dying for the people—

Edith. Living! living!

Har. Yea so, good cheer! thou art

Harold, I am Edith!

Look not thus wan!

Edith. What matters how I look?

Have we not broken Wales and Norse-  
land? slain, [war,

Whose life was all one battle, incarnate  
Their giant-king, a mightier man-in-  
Than William. [arms

Har. Ay, my girl, no tricks in him—  
No bastard he! when all was lost, he  
yell'd, [ground,

And bit his shield, and dash'd it on the  
And swaying his two-handed sword  
about him. [upon us

Two deaths at every swing, ran in  
And died so, and I loved him as I hate  
This liar who made me liar. If Hate  
can kill, [axe—

And Loathing wield a Saxon battle-

Edith. Waste not thy might before  
the battle!

Har. No,

And thou must hence. Stigand will  
see thee safe,

And so—Farewell.

[He is going, but turns back.

The ring thou dar'est not wear,  
I have had it fashion'd, see, to meet  
my hand.

[Harold shows the ring which is  
on his finger.

Farewell!

[He is going, but turns back again.

I am dead as Death this day to aught  
of earth's

Save William's death or mine.

Edith. Thy death!—to-day!

Is it not thy birthday?

Har. Ay, that happy day!

A birthday welcome! happy days and  
many!

One—this! [They embrace.

Look, I will bear thy blessing into the  
battle

And front the doom of God.

Norman cries (heard in the distance).

Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

Enter Gurth.

Gurth. The Norman moves!

Har. Harold and Holy Cross!

[Exeunt Harold and Gurth.

Enter Stigand.

Stig. Our Church in arms—the lamb  
the lion—not

Spear into pruning-hook—the counter  
way—

Cowl, helm; and crozier, battle-axe.

Abbot Alfwig, [boro'

Leofric, and all the monks of Peter-  
Strike for the king; but I, old wretch,

old Stigand, —and yet

With hands too limp to brandish iron

I have a power—would Harold ask me

I have a power. [for it—

Edith. What power, holy father?

Stig. Power now from Harold to

command thee hence

And see thee safe from Senlac.

Edith. I remain!

Stig. Yea, so will I, daughter, until

I find [see it

Which way the battle balance. I can

From where we stand: and, live ordie,  
I would I were among them?

Canons from Waltham (singing with-  
out).

Salva patriam,

Sancte Pater,

Salva Fili,

Salva Spiritus,

Salva patriam,

Sancta Mater.\*

Edith. Are those the blessed angels  
quiring, father?

Stig. No, daughter, but the canons  
out of Waltham, [low'd him.

The king's foundation, that have fol-

Edith. O God of battles, make their

wall of shields [isades!

Firm as thy cliffs, strengthen their pal-

What is that whirling sound?

Stig. The Norman arrow!

Edith. Look out upon the battle—is

he safe? [between his banners.

Stig. The king of England stands

He glitters on the crowning of the hill.

God save king Harold!

Edith. —chosen by his people

And fighting for his people!

Stig. There is one

Come as Goliath came of yore—he

flings

His brand in air and catches it again,

He is chanting some old warsong.

Edith. And no David

To meet him? [him,

Stig. Ay, there springs a Saxon on

Falls—and another falls.

Edith. Have mercy on us!

Stig. Lo! our good Gurth hath

smitten him to the death.

Edith. So perish all the enemies of

Harold!

Canons (singing).

Hostis in Angliam

Ruit prædator,

Illorum, Domine,

Scutum scindatur!

Hostis per Angliæ

Plagas bacchatur;

\* The " throughout these hymns should be  
sounded broad, as in "father."

*Casa crematur,  
Pastor fugatur  
Grex trucidatur—*

*Stig.* Illos trucida, Domine.

*Edith.* Ay, good father.

*Canons (singing).*

*Illorum scelera  
Pœna sequatur!*

*English cries.* Harold and Holy Cross! Out! out!

*Stig.* Our javelins  
Answer their arrows. All the Norman foot [of knights

Are storming up the hill. The range  
Sit, each a statue on his horse, and wait. [mighty!

*Eng. cries.* Harold and God Al-

*Norman cries.* Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

*Canons (singing).*

*Equus cum pedite  
Præpediatur!  
Illorum in lacrymas  
Cruor fundatur!  
Pereant, pereant,  
Anglia precatur.*

*Stig.* Look, daughter, look.

*Edith.* Nay, father, look for me!

*Stig.* Our axes lighten with a single flash [heads  
About the summit of the hill, and  
And arms are sliver'd off and splinter'd by [Norman flies.

Their lightning—and they fly—the

*Edith.* Stigand, O father, have we won the day? [behind the horse—

*Stig.* No, daughter, no—they fall  
Their horse are thronging to the barricades;

I see the gonfanon of Holy Peter  
Floating above their helmets—ha! he is down!

*Edith.* He down! Who down?

*Stig.* The Norman Count is down.

*Edith.* So perish all the enemies of England!

*Stig.* No, no, he hath risen again—he bares his face— [all their horse  
Shouts something—he points onward—  
Swallow the hill locust-like, swarming up. [battle-axe keen

*Edith.* O God of battles, make his  
As thine own sharp-dividing justice, heavy [ful heads

As thine own bolts that fall on crime—  
Charged with the weight of heaven  
wherefrom they fall!

*Canons (singing).*

*Jacta tonitrua  
Deus bellator!  
Surgas e tenebris,  
Sis vindicator!  
Fulmina, fulmina  
Deus vastator!*

*Edith.* O God of battles, they are three to one, [them down!  
Make thou one man as three to roll  
*Canons (singing).*

*Equus cum equite  
Dejiciatur!  
Acies, Acies  
Prona sternatur!  
Illorum lanceas  
Frangere Creator!*

*Stig.* Yea, yea, for how their lances snap and shiver [axe!  
Against the shifting blaze of Harold's War-woodman of old Woden. how he fells [there!  
The mortal corpse of faces! There! And  
The horse and horsemen cannot meet the shield. [cleaves the horse,  
The blow that brains the horseman  
The horse and horsemen roll along the hill, [flies!  
They fly once more, they fly, the Norman.

*Equus cum equite  
Præcipitatur.*

*Edith.* O God, the God of truth hath heard my cry. [to the sea!  
Follow them, follow them, drive them

*Illorum scelera  
Pœna sequatur!*

*Stig.* Truth! no; a lie; a trick, a Norman trick!

They turn on the pursuer, horse against  
They murder all that follow. [foot,

*Edith.* Have mercy on us!

*Stig.* Hot-headed fools—to burst the wall of shields! [of the king!

They have broken the commandment

*Edith.* His oath was broken—O holy Norman saints, [beyond

Ye that are now of heaven, and see  
Your Norman shrines, pardon it, pardon it, [loved,

That he forswore himself for all he  
Me, me and all! Look out upon the battle! [barricades.

*Stig.* They thunder again upon the  
My sight is eagle, but the strife so thick— [hold, willow!

This is the hottest of it: hold, ash!

*Eng. cries.* Out, out!

*Nor. cries.*

Ha Rou!

*Stig.* Ha! Gurth hath leapt upon him.

And slain him: he hath fallen.

*Edith.* And I am heard.

Glory to God in the Highest! fallen, fallen! [another—wields

*Stig.* No, no, his horse—he mounts  
His war-club, dashes it on Gurth, and Gurth,

Our noble Gurth is down!

*Edith.* Have mercy on us!  
O Thou that knowest, let not my strong prayer

Be weakened in thy sight, because I love

The husband of another!

*Nor. cries.* Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

*Edith.* I do not hear our English war-cry.





*Stig.* Nò.

*Edith.* Look out upon the battle—is he safe?

*Stig.* He stands between the banners with the dead

So piled about him he can hardly move.  
*Edith* (takes up the war-cry). Out! out!

*Nor. cries.* Ha Rou!

*Edith* (cries out). Harold and Holy Cross!

*Nor. cries.* Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

*Edith.* What is that whirring sound?

*Stig.* The Norman sends his arrows up to Heaven,

They fall on those within the palisade!

*Edith.* Look out upon the hill—is Harold there?

*Stig.* Sanguelac—Sanguelac—the arrow—the arrow!—away!

SCENE II.—*Field of the dead. Night.*  
Aldwyth and Edith.

*Ald.* O Edith, art thou here? O Harold, Harold— [more.]

Our Harold—we shall never see him

*Edith.* For there was more than sister in my kiss, [not love them,

And so the saints were wroth. I cannot for they are Norman saints—and yet I should—

They are so much holier than their harlot's son

With whom they play'd their game against the king!

*Ald.* The king is slain, the kingdom overthrown!

*Edith.* No matter!

*Ald.* How no matter, Harold slain?—I cannot find his body. O help me thou!

O Edith, if I ever wrought against thee, Forgive me thou, and help me here!

*Edith.* No matter!

*Ald.* Not help me, nor forgive me?

*Edith.* So thou saidest.

*Ald.* I say it now, forgive me!

*Edith.* Cross me not!

I am seeking one who wedded me in secret. [Ha!

Whisper! God's angels only know it.

What art thou doing here among the dead? [naked yonder,

They are stripping the dead bodies And thou art come to rob them of their rings!

*Ald.* O Edith, Edith, I have lost both crown

And husband.

*Edith.* So have I.

*Ald.* I tell thee, girl, I am seeking my dead Harold.

*Edith.* And I mine!

The Holy Father strangled him with a hair

Of Peter, and his brother Tostig helpt; The wicked sister clapt her hands and laugh'd;

Then all the dead fell on him.

*Ald.* Edith, Edith—

*Edith.* What was he like, this husband? like to thee? [not.

Call not for help from me. I knew him He lies not here; not close beside the standard. [England.

Here fell the truest, manliest hearts of Go further hence and find him.

*Ald.* She is crazed!

*Edith.* That doth not matter either.

Lower the light.

He must be here.

*Enter two Canons, Osgod and Athelric, with torches. They turn over the dead bodies and examine them as they pass.*

*Osgod.* I think that this is Thurkill.

*Athelric.* More likely Godric.

*Osgod.* I am sure this body

Is Alfwig, the king's uncle.

*Ath.* So it is!

No, no—brave Gurth, one gash from brow to knee!

*Osgood.* And here is Leofwin.

*Edith.* And here is He!

*Ald.* Harold? Oh no—nay, if it were—my God, [his face  
They have so maim'd and murder'd all There is no man can swear to him.

*Edith.* But one woman!

Look you, we never mean to part again. I have found him, I am happy.

Was there not some one ask'd me for forgiveness?

I yield it freely, being the true wife Of this dead King, who never bore revenge.

*Enter Count William and William Malet.*

*Will.* Who be these women? And what body is this?

*Edith.* Harold, thy better!

*Will.* Ay, and what art thou?

*Edith.* His wife!

*Malet.* Not true, my girl, here is the Queen. [Pointing out Aldwyth,]

*Will.* (to Aldwyth). Wast thou his Queen?

*Ald.* I was the Queen of Wales.

*Will.* Why then of England. Madam, fear us not.

(To Malet.)

Knowest thou this other?

*Malet.* When I visited England, Some held she was his wife in secret—

some— [mour.

Well—some believed she was his para-

*Edith.* Norman, thou liest! liars all of you, [and she—

You! Saints and all! I am his wife!

For look, our marriage ring!

[She draws it off the finger of Harold.

I lost it somehow—I lost it, playing with it when I was wild.

That bred the doubt! but I am wiser now. . . I am too wise. . . Will none among you all

Bear me true witness—only for this  
once—

That I have found it here again?

[*She puts it on.*]

And thou,

Thy wife am I for ever and evermore.

[*Falls on the body and dies.*]

*Will.* Death!—and enough of death  
for this one day,

The day of St. Calixtus, and the day,  
My day, when I was born.

*Malet.* And this dead king's,  
Who, king or not, hath kinglike fought  
and fallen, [even]

His birthday, too. It seems but yester-  
I held it with him in his English halls,  
His day, with all his roof-tree ringing  
'Harold,'

Before he fell into the snare of Guy;  
When all men counted Harold would  
be king,

And Harold was most happy.

*Will.* Thou art half English.  
Take them away!

*Malet.* I vow to build a church to God  
Here on this hill of battle; let our high  
altar [where these two lie]

Stand where their standard fell . . .  
Take them away, I do not love to see  
them. [*Malet!*]

Pluck the dead woman off the dead man,  
*Malet.* Faster than ivy. Must I hack  
her arms off?

How shall I part them?

*Will.* Leave them. Let them be!  
Bury him and his paramour together.  
He that was false in oath to me, it seems  
Was false to his own wife. We will not  
give him [prior,

A Christian burial; yet he was a war-  
And wise, yea truthful, till that blight-  
ed vow

Which God avenged to-day.

Wrap them together in a purple cloak  
And lay them both upon the waste sea-  
shore [which]

At Hastings, there to guard the land for  
He did forswear himself—a warrior—  
ay,

And but that Holy Peter fought for us,  
And that the false Northumbrian held  
aloof, [the Saints]

And save for that chance arrow which  
Sharpen'd and sent against him—who  
can tell?— [twice]

Three horses had I slain beneath me:  
I thought that all was lost. Since I  
knew battle, [yet]

And that was from my boyhood, never  
No, by the splendor of God—have I  
fought men [guard]

Like Harold and his brethren, and his  
Of English. Every man about his king  
Fell where he stood. They loved him:

and, pray God [with me]  
My Normans may but move as true  
To the door of death. Of one self-stock  
at first, [English;]

Make them again one people—Norman,  
And English, Norman:—we should  
have a hand

To grasp the world with, and a foot to  
stamp it . . .

Flat. Praise the Saints. It is over.  
No more blood!

I am king of England, so they thwart  
me not,

And I will rule according to their laws.

(*To Aldwyth.*)

Madam, we will entreat thee with all  
honor.

*Ald.* My punishment is more than I  
can bear.

## 'THE REVENGE.'

### A BALLAD OF THE FLEET.

#### I.

At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Gren-  
ville lay,

And a pinnace like a flutter'd bird, came  
flying from far away;

'Spanish ships of war at sea! we have  
sighted fifty-three!'

Then sware Lord Thomas Howard: 'Fore  
God I am no coward!

But I cannot meet them here, for my  
ships are out of gear,

And the half my men are sick. I must  
fly, but follow quick.

We are six ships of the line; can we fight  
with fifty-three?'

#### II.

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: 'I  
know you are no coward;

You fly them for a moment to fight with  
them again.

But I've ninety men and more that are  
lying sick ashore.

I should count myself the coward if I left  
them, my Lord Howard,

To these Inquisition dogs and the devil-  
doms of Spain.'

#### III.

So Lord Howard past away with five ships  
of war that day,

Till he melted like a cloud in the silent  
summer heaven;

But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick  
men from the land

Very carefully and slow,  
Men of Bideford in Devon.

And we laid them on the ballast down below;  
For we brought them all aboard,  
And they blest him in their pain, that they were not left to Spain,  
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the glory of the Lord.

IV.

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and to fight,  
And he sail'd away from Flores till the Spaniard came in sight,  
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather bow.  
'Shall we fight or shall we fly?  
Good Sir Richard, let us know,  
For to fight is but to die!  
There'll be little of us left by the time this sun be set.'  
And Sir Richard said again: 'We be all good English men.  
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the devil,  
For I never turn'd my back upon Don or devil yet.'

V.

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and we roared a hurrah, and so  
The little 'Revenge' ran on sheer into the heart of the foe,  
With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety sick below;  
For half of their fleet to the right and half to the left were seen,  
And the little 'Revenge' ran on thro' the long sea-lane between.

VI.

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down from their decks and laugh'd,  
Thousands of their seamen made mock at the mad little craft  
Running on and on, till delay'd  
By their mountain-like 'San Philip' that, of fifteen hundred tons,  
And up-shadowing high above us with her yawning tiers of guns,  
Took the breath from our sails, and we stay'd.

VII.

And while now the great 'San Philip' hung above us like a cloud  
Whence the thunderbolt will fall  
Long and loud,  
Four galleons drew away  
From the Spanish fleet that day,  
And two upon the larboard and two upon the starboard lay,  
And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

VIII.

But anon the great 'San Philip,' she be-  
thought herself and went  
Having that within her womb that had left her ill-content;

And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought us hand to hand,  
For a dozen times they came with their pikes and musqueteers,  
And a dozen time we shook 'em off as a dog that shakes his ears  
When he leaps from the water to the land.

IX.

And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over the summer sea,  
But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the fifty-three.  
Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built galleons came,  
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-thunder and flame;  
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with her dead and her shame,  
For some were sunk and many were shatter'd, and so could fight us no more—  
God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the world before?

X.

For he said, 'Fight on! fight on!'  
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck,  
And it chanced that, when half of the summer night was gone,  
With a grisly wound to be drest he had left the deck,  
But a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly dead,  
And himself he was wounded again in the side and the head,  
And he said, 'Fight on! fight on!'

XI.

And the night went down, and the sun smiled out far over the summer sea,  
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay round us all in a ring;  
But they dared not touch us again, for they fear'd that we still could sting,  
So they watch'd what the end would be,  
And we had not fought them in vain,  
But in perilous plight were we,  
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,  
And half of the rest of us maim'd for life  
In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate strife;  
And the sick men down in the hold were most of them stark and cold,  
And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the powder was all of it spent;  
And the masts and the rigging were lying over the side;  
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride,  
'We have fought such a fight for a day and a night  
As may never be fought again!  
We have won great glory, my men!  
And a day less or more  
At sea or shore,  
We die—does it matter when?

Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink  
her, split her in twain!  
Fall into the hands of God, not into the  
hands of Spain!’

## XII.

And the gunner said ‘Ay, ay,’ but the  
seamen made reply:  
‘We have children, we have wives,  
And the Lord hath spared our lives,  
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we  
yield, to let us go;  
We shall live to fight again and to strike  
another blow.’  
And the lion there lay dying, and they  
yielded to the foe.

## XIII.

And the stately Spanish men to their flag-  
ship bore him then,  
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir  
Richard caught at last,  
And they praised him to his face with  
their courtly foreign grace;  
But he rose upon their decks, and he  
cried:  
‘I have fought for Queen and Faith like  
a vallant man and true;  
I have only done my duty as a man is  
bound to do:  
With a cheerful spirit I Sir Richard Gren-  
ville die!’  
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

## XIV.

And they stared at the dead that had  
been so vallant and true,  
And had holden the power and glory of  
Spain so cheap  
That he dared her with one little ship and  
his English few;  
Was he devil or man? He was devil for  
aught they knew,  
But they sank his body with honor’ down  
into the deep,  
And they mann’d the ‘Revenge’ with a  
swarthier alien crew.  
And away she sail’d with her loss and  
long’d for her own;  
When a wind from the lands they had  
ruin’d awoke from sleep,  
And the water began to heave and the  
weather to moan,  
And or ever that evening ended a great  
gale blew,  
And a wave like the wave that is raised  
by an earthquake grew,  
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails  
and their masts and their flags,  
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the  
shot-shatter’d navy of Spain,  
And the little ‘Revenge’ herself went  
down by the island crags  
To be lost evermore in the main.

## DEDICATORY POEM

TO

## THE PRINCESS ALICE.

DEAD PRINCESS, living Power, if that,  
which lived  
True life, live on—and if the fatal kiss,  
Born of true life and love, divorce thee  
not  
From earthly love and life—if what we  
call  
The spirit flash not all at once from out  
This shadow into Substance—then per-  
haps  
The mellow’d murmur of the people’s  
praise  
From thine own State, and all our breadth  
of realm,  
Where Love and Longing dress thy deeds  
in light,  
Ascends to thee; and this March morn  
that sees

Thy Soldier-brother’s bridal-orange bloom  
Break thro’ the yews and cypress of thy  
grave,  
And thine Imperial mother smile again,  
May send one ray to thee! and who can  
tell—  
Thou—England’s England-loving daugh-  
ter—thou  
Dying so English thou wouldst have her  
flag  
Borne on thy coffin—where is he can swear  
But that some broken gleam from our poor  
earth  
May touch thee, while remembering thee,  
I lay  
At thy pale feet this ballad of the deeds  
Of England, and her banner in thy  
fast?

## THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW.

## I.

BANNER of England, not for a season, O  
 banner, of Britain, hast thou  
 Floated in conquering battle or flap to the  
 battle-cry!  
 Never with mightier glory than when we  
 had rear'd thee on high  
 Flying at top of the roofs in the ghastly  
 siege of Lucknow—  
 Shot thro' the staff or the halcyard, but  
 ever we raised thee anew,  
 And ever upon the topmost roof our ban-  
 ner of England blew.

## II.

Trail were the works that defended the  
 hold that we held with our lives—  
 Women and children among us, God help  
 them, our children and wives!  
 Hold it we might—and for fifteen days or  
 for twenty at most.  
 'Never surrender, I charge you, but every  
 man die at his post!'—  
 Voice of the dead whom we loved, our  
 Lawrence the best of the brave:  
 Cold were his brows when we kiss'd him—  
 we laid him that night in his grave,  
 Every man die at his post!' and there  
 hail'd on our houses and halls  
 Death from their rifle-bullets, and death  
 from their cannon-balls,  
 Death in our innermost chamber, and  
 death at our slight barricade,  
 Death while we stood with the musket, and  
 death while we stoop'd to the spade,  
 Death to the dying, and wounds to the  
 wounded, for often there fell  
 Striking the hospital wall, crashing thro'  
 it, their shot and their shell,  
 Death—for their spies were among us,  
 their marksmen were told of our best,  
 So that the brute bullet broke thro' the  
 brain that could think for the rest;  
 Bullets would sing by our foreheads, and  
 bullets would rain at our feet—  
 Fire from ten thousand at once of the  
 rebels that girdled us round—  
 Death at the glimpse of a finger from over  
 the breadth of a street,  
 Death from the heights of the mosque and  
 the palace, and death in the ground!  
 Mine? yes, a mine! Countermine! down,  
 down! and creep thro' the hole!  
 Keep the revolver in hand! You can  
 hear him—the murderous mole.  
 Quiet, ah! quiet—wait till the point of  
 the pickaxe be thro'!  
 Click with the pick, coming nearer and  
 nearer again than before—  
 Now let it speak, and you fire, and the  
 dark pioneer is no more;  
 And ever upon the topmost roof our ban-  
 ner of England blew.

## III.

Ay, but the foe sprung his mine many  
 times, and it chanced on a day  
 Soon as the blast of that underground  
 thunderclap echo'd away,  
 Dark thro' the smoke and the sulphur like  
 so many fiends in their hell—  
 Cannon-shot, musket-shot, volley on vol-  
 ley, and yell upon yell—  
 Fiercely on all the defences our myriad  
 enemy fell.  
 What have they done? where is it? Out  
 yonder. Guard the Redan!  
 Storm at the Water-gate! storm at the  
 Bailey-gate! storm, and it ran  
 Surging and swaying all round us, as  
 ocean on every side  
 Plunges and heaves at a bank that is  
 daily drown'd by the tide—  
 So many thousands that if they be bold  
 enough, who shall escape?  
 Kill or be kill'd, live or die, they shall  
 know we are soldiers and men!  
 Ready! take aim at their leaders—their  
 masses are gapp'd with our grape—  
 Backward they reel like the wave, like the  
 wave flinging forward again,  
 Flying and foild at the last by the hand-  
 ful they could not subdue;  
 And ever upon the topmost roof our ban-  
 ner of England blew.

## IV.

Handful of men as we were, we were Eng-  
 lish in heart and in limb,  
 Strong with the strength of the race to  
 command, to obey, to endure,  
 Each of us fought as if hope for the garri-  
 son hung but on him;  
 Still—could we watch at all points? we  
 were every day fewer and fewer.  
 There was a whisper among us, but only a  
 whisper that past:  
 'Children and wives—if the tigers leap  
 into the fold unawares—  
 Every man die at his post—and the foe  
 may cuthe us at last—  
 Better to fall by the hands that they love,  
 than to fall into theirs!'—  
 Roar upon roar in a moment two mines by  
 the enemy sprung  
 Clove into perilous chasms our walls and  
 our poor palisades.  
 Rifleman, true is your heart, but be sure  
 that your hand be as true!  
 Sharp is the fire of assault, better aim'd  
 are your flank fusillades—  
 Twice do we hurl them to earth from the  
 ladders to which they had clung,  
 Twice from the ditch where they shelter  
 we drive them with hand-grenades;  
 And ever upon the topmost roof our ban-  
 ner of England blew.

## V.

Then on another wild morning another  
 wild earthquake out-tore  
 Clean from our lines of defence ten or  
 twelve good paces or more.  
 Rifleman, high on the roof, hidden there  
 from the light of the sun—  
 One has leapt up on the breach, crying  
 out: 'Follow me, follow me!'—  
 Mark him—he falls! then another, and  
 him too, and down goes he.  
 Had they been bold enough then, who can  
 tell but the traitors had won?  
 Boardings and rafters and doors—an em-  
 brasure! make way for the gun!  
 Now double-charge it with grape! It is  
 charged and we fire, and they run.  
 Praise to our Indian brothers, and let the  
 dark face have his due!  
 Thanks to the kindly dark faces who fought  
 with us, faithful and few,  
 Fought with the bravest among us, and  
 drove them, and smote them, and  
 slew,  
 That ever upon the topmost roof our ban-  
 ner in India blew.

## VI.

Men will forget what we suffer and not  
 what we do. We can fight;  
 But to be soldier all day and be sentinel  
 all thro' the night—  
 Ever the mine and assault, our sallies, their  
 lying alarms.  
 Bugles and drums in the darkness, and  
 shoutings and soundings to arms.  
 Ever the labour of fifty that had to be  
 done by five,  
 Ever the marvel among us that one should  
 be left alive,  
 Ever the day with its traitorous death from  
 the loop-holes around,  
 Ever the night with its coffinless corpse to  
 be laid in the ground.  
 Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a deluge  
 of cataract skies,  
 Stench of old offal decaying, and infinite  
 torment of flies,  
 Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing  
 over an English field,

Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound that  
*would* not be heal'd,  
 Lopping away of the limb by the pitiful-  
 pitiless knife,—  
 Torture and trouble in vain,—for it never  
 could save us a life,  
 Valour of delicate women who tended the  
 hospital bed,  
 Horror of women in travail among the  
 dying and dead,  
 Grief for our perishing children, and never  
 a moment for grief,  
 Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering  
 hopes of relief,  
 Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butcher'd  
 for all that we knew—  
 Then day and night, day and night, com-  
 ing down on the still-shatter'd walls  
 Millions of musket-bullets, and thousands  
 of cannon-balls—  
 But ever upon the topmost roof our ban-  
 ner of England blew.

## VII.

Hark cannonade, fusillade! is it true what  
 was told by the scout?  
 Outram and Havelock breaking their way  
 thro' the fell mutineers!  
 Surely the pibroch of Europe is ringing  
 again in our ears!  
 All on a sudden the garrison utter a jubi-  
 lant shout,  
 Havelock's glorious Highlanders answer  
 with conquering cheers,  
 Forth from their holes and their hidings  
 our women and children come out,  
 Blessing the wholesome white faces of  
 Havelock's good fusileers,  
 Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the  
 Highlander wet with their tears!  
 Dance to the pibroch!—saved! we are  
 saved!—is it you? is it you?  
 Saved by the valour of Havelock, saved  
 by the blessing of Heaven!  
 'Hold it for fifteen days!' we have held  
 it for eighty-seven!  
 And ever aloft on the palace roof the old  
 banner of England blew.

## THE LOVER'S TALE.

THE original preface to "The Lover's Tale" states that it was composed in my nineteenth year. Two only of the three parts then written were printed, when, feeling the imperfection of the poem, I withdrew it from the press. One of my friends, however, who, boy-like, admired the boy's work, distributed among our common associates of that hour some copies of these two parts, without my knowledge, without the omissions and amendments which I had in contemplation, and marred by the many misprints of the compositor. Seeing that these two parts have of late been mercilessly pirated, and that what I had deemed scarce worthy to live is not allowed to die, may I not be pardoned if I suffer the whole poem at last to come into the light, accompanied with a reprint of the sequel,—a work of my mature life,—"The Golden Supper"?

May, 1870.

## ARGUMENT.

Julian, whose cousin and foster sister, Camilla, has been wedded to his friend and rival, Lionel, endeavors to narrate the story of his own love for her, and the strange sequel. He speaks (in Parts II. and III.) of having been haunted by visions and the sound of bells, tolling for a funeral, and at last ringing for a marriage; but he breaks away, overcome, as he approaches the Event, and a witness to it completes the tale.

## I.

HERE far away, seen from the topmost cliff,

Filling with purple gloom the vacancies  
Between the tufted hills, the sloping seas  
Hung in mid-heaven, and half way down  
rare sails,

White as white clouds, floated from sky to sky.

Oh! pleasant breast of waters, quiet bay,  
Like to a quiet mind in the loud world,  
Where the chafed breakers of the outer sea  
Sank powerless, as anger falls aside  
And withers on the breast of peaceful love;  
Thou didst receive the growth of pines  
that fledge

The hills that watched thee, as Love  
watcheth Love,

In thine own essence, and delight thyself  
To make it wholly thine on sunny days.  
Keep thou thy name of "Lover's Bay."

See, sirs,

Even now the Goddess of the Past, that  
takes

The heart, and sometimes touches but one  
string

That quivers, and is silent, and sometimes  
Sweeps suddenly all its half-moulder'd  
chords

To some old melody, begins to play  
That air which pleased her first. I feel  
thy breath;

I come, great Mistress of the ear and eye;  
Thy breath is of the pine wood; and tho'  
years

Have hollow'd out a deep and stormy strait  
Betwixt the native land of Love and me,  
Breathe but a little on me, and the sail  
Will draw me to the rising of the sun,

The lucid chambers of the morning star,  
And East of Life.

Permit me, friend, I prithee,  
To pass my hand across my brows, and  
muse

On those dear hills, that never more will  
meet

The sight that throbs and aches beneath  
my touch,

As tho' there beat a heart in either eye;  
For when the outer lights are darken'd  
thus,

The memory's vision hath a keener edge.

It grows upon me now—the semicircle  
Of dark blue waters and the narrow fringe  
Of curving beach—its wreaths of dripping  
green—

Its pale pink shells—the summer-house  
aloft

That open'd on the pines with doors of  
glass,

A mountain nest—the pleasure-boat that  
rock'd

Light green with its own shadow, keel to  
keel,

Upon the dappled dimplings of the wave,  
That blanch'd upon its side.

O Love, O Hope!  
They come, they crowd upon me all at  
once—

Moved from the cloud of unforgotten  
things,

That sometimes on the horizon of the  
mind

Lies folded, often sweeps athwart in  
storm—

Flash upon flash they lighten thro' me—  
days

Of dewy dawning and the amber eyes

When thou and I, Camilla, thou and I  
 Were borne about the bay or safely moor'd  
 Beneath a low-brow'd cavern, where the  
 tide  
 Plash'd, sapping its worn ribs; and all  
 without  
 The slowly ridging rollers on the cliffs  
 Clash'd, calling to each other, and thro'  
 the arch  
 Down those loud waters, like a setting star,  
 Mixt with the gorgeous west the light-  
 house shone,  
 And silver-smiling Venus ere she fell  
 Would often loiter in her balmy blue,  
 To crown it with herself.

Here, too, my love  
 Waver'd at anchor with me, when day  
 hung  
 From his mid-dome in Heaven's airy halls;  
 Gleams of the water-circles, as they broke,  
 Flicker'd like doubtful smiles about her  
 lips,  
 Quiver'd a flying glory on her hair,  
 Leapt like a passing thought across her  
 eyes;  
 And mine with one that will not pass, till  
 earth  
 And heaven pass too, dwelt on my heaven,  
 a face  
 Most starry-fair, but kindled from within  
 As 'twere with dawn. She was dark-  
 haired, dark-eyed;  
 Oh, such dark eyes! a single glance of  
 them  
 Will govern a whole life from birth to  
 death,  
 Careless of all things else, led on with light  
 In trances and in visions: look at them,  
 You lose yourself in utter ignorance;  
 You cannot find their depth; for they go  
 back,  
 And farther back, and still withdraw them-  
 selves  
 Quite into the deep soul, that evermore  
 Fresh springing from her fountains in the  
 brain,  
 Still pouring thro', floods with redundant  
 life  
 Her narrow portals.

Trust me, long ago  
 I should have died, if it were possible  
 To die in gazing on that perfectness  
 Which I do bear within me: I had died,  
 But from my farthest lapse, my latest  
 ebb,  
 Thine image, like a charm of light and  
 strength  
 Upon the waters, push'd me back again  
 On these deserted sands of barren life.  
 Tho' from the deep vault where the heart  
 of Hope  
 Fell into dust, and crumbled in the dark—  
 Forgetting how to render beautiful  
 Her countenance with quick and healthful  
 blood—  
 Thou didst not sway me upward; could I  
 perish  
 While thou, a meteor of the sepulchre,

Didst swathe thyself all round Hope's  
 quiet urn  
 Forever? He, that saith it, hath o'erstept  
 The slippery footing of his narrow wit,  
 And fall'n away from judgment. Thou  
 art light,  
 To which my spirit leaneth all her flowers,  
 And length of days, and immortality  
 Of thought, and freshness ever self-re-  
 new'd.  
 For Time and Grief abode too long with  
 Life,  
 And, like all other friends i' the world, at  
 last  
 They grew aweary of her fellowship:  
 So Time and Grief did beckon unto Death,  
 And Death drew nigh and beat the doors  
 of Life;  
 But thou didst sit alone in the inner house,  
 A wakeful portress, and didst parle with  
 Death,—  
 "This is a charm'd dwelling which I  
 hold;"  
 So Death gave back, and would no further  
 come.  
 Yet is my life nor in the present time,  
 Nor in the present place. To me alone,  
 Push'd from his chair of regal heritage,  
 The Present is the vassal of the Past:  
 So that, in that I *have* lived, do I live,  
 And cannot die, and am, in having been,  
 A portion of the pleasant yesterday,  
 Thrust forward on to-day and out of place;  
 A body journeying onward, sick with toil,  
 The weight as if of age upon my limbs,  
 The grasp of hopeless grief about my heart,  
 And all the senses weaken'd, save in that,  
 Which long ago they had glean'd and gar-  
 ner'd up  
 Into the granaries of memory—  
 The clear brow, bulwark of the precious  
 brain,  
 Chink'd as you see, and seam'd—and all  
 the while  
 The light soul twines and mingles with  
 the growths  
 Of vigorous early days, attracted, won,  
 Married, made one with, molten into all  
 The beautiful in Past of act or place,  
 And like the all-enduring camel, driven  
 Far from the diamond fountain by the  
 palms,  
 Who toils across the middle moon-lit  
 nights,  
 Or when the white heats of the blinding  
 noons  
 Beat from the concave sand; yet in him  
 keeps  
 A draught of that sweet fountain that he  
 loves,  
 To stay his feet from falling, and his spirit  
 From bitterness of death.

Ye ask me, friends,  
 When I began to love. How should I tell  
 you?  
 Or from the after-fullness of my heart,  
 Flow back again unto my slender spring  
 And first of love, tho' every turn and depth  
 Between is clearer in my life than all

Its present flow. Ye know not what ye ask.

How should the broad and open flower tell  
What sort of bud it was, when, prest together

In its green sheath, close-lapt in silken folds,

It seem'd to keep its sweetness to itself,  
Yet was not the less sweet for that it seem'd?

For young Life knows not when young Life was born,

But takes it all for granted: neither Love,  
Warm in the heart, his cradle, can remember

Love in the womb, but resteth satisfied,  
Looking on her that brought him to the light:

Or as men know not when they fall asleep  
Into delicious dreams, our other life,  
So know I not when I began to love.

This is my sum of knowledge—that my love

Grew with myself—say rather, was my growth,

My inward sap, the hold I have on earth,  
My outward circling air wherewith I breathe,

Which yet upholds my life, and evermore  
Is to me daily life and daily death:

For how should I have lived and not have loved?

Can ye take off the sweetness from the flower,

The color and the sweetness from the rose,  
And place them by themselves; or set apart

Their motions and their brightness from the stars,

And then point out the flower or the star?  
Or build a wall betwixt my life and love,

And tell me where I am? 'T is even thus:  
In that I live I love; because I love

I live: whate'er is fountain to the one  
Is fountain to the other; and whenc'er

Our God unknits the riddle of the one,  
There is no shade or fold of mystery  
Swathing the other.

Many, many years

(For they seem many and my most of life,  
And well I could have linger'd in that porch,

So unproportion'd to the dwelling-place),  
In the May dews of childhood, opposite  
The flush and dawn of youth, we lived together,

Apart, alone together on those hills.

Before he saw my day my father died,  
And he was happy that he saw it not;  
But I and the first daisy on his grave  
From the same clay came into light at once.

As Love and I do number equal years,  
So she, my love, is of an age with me.  
How like each other was the birth of each!  
On the same morning, almost the same hour,

Under the selfsame aspect of the stars

(O falsehood of all starcraft!), we were born.

How like each other was the birth of each!  
The sister of my mother—she that bore

Camilla close beneath her beating heart,  
Which to the imprison'd spirit of the child,

With its true-touch'd pulses in the flow  
And hourly visitation of the blood,

Sent notes of preparation manifold,  
And mellow'd echoes of the outer world—

My mother's sister, mother of my love,  
Who had a twofold claim upon my heart,

One twofold mightier than the other was,  
In giving so much beauty to the world,

And so much wealth as God had charged  
her with—

Loathing to put it from herself forever,  
Left her own life with it; and dying thus,

Crown'd with her highest act the placid face

And breathless body of her good deeds past.

So we were born, so orphan'd. She was motherless

And I without a father. So from each  
Of those two pillars which from earth uphold

Our childhood, one had fallen away, and all

The careful burden of our tender years  
Trembled upon the other. He that gave

Her life, to me delightfully fulfill'd  
All loving-kindnesses, all offices

Of watchful care and trembling tenderness.

He waked for both: he pray'd for both:  
he slept

Dreaming of both: nor was his love the less

Because it was divided, and shot forth  
Boughs on each side, laden with whole-

some shade,  
Wherein we nested sleeping or awake,

And sang aloud the matin-song of life.

She was my foster-sister: on one arm  
The flaxen ringlets of our infancies

Wander'd, the while we rested: one soft lap

Pillow'd us both: a common light of eyes  
Was on us as we lay: our baby lips,

Kissing one bosom, ever drew from thence  
The stream of life, one stream, one life,

one blood,  
One sustenance, which, still as thought

grew large,  
Still larger moulding all the house of

thought,  
Made all our tastes and fancies like, per-

haps—  
All—all but one; and strange to me, and

sweet,  
Sweet thro' strange years to know that

whatsoever

Our general mother meant for me alone,  
Our mutual mother dealt to both of us:

So what was earliest mine in earliest life,  
I shared with her in whom myself re-

mains.

As was our childhood, so our infancy,  
 They tell me, was a very miracle  
 Of fellow-feeling and communion.  
 They tell me that we would not be alone—  
 We cried when we were parted; when I  
   wept,  
 Her smile lit up the rainbow on my tears,  
 Staid on the cloud of sorrow; that we  
   loved  
 The sound of one another's voices more  
 Than the gray cuckoo loves his name, and  
   learnt  
 To lisp in tune together; that we slept  
 In the same cradle always, face to face,  
 Heart beating time to heart, lip pressing  
   lip,  
 Folding each other, breathing on each  
   other,  
 Dreaming together (dreaming of each  
   other  
 They should have added), till the morning  
   light  
 Sloped thro' the pines, upon the dewy pane  
 Falling, unseal'd our eyelids, and we woke  
 To gaze upon each other. If this be true,  
 At thought of which my whole soul lan-  
   guishes  
 And faints, and hath no pulse, no breath  
   —as tho'  
 A man in some still garden should infuse  
 Rich attar in the bosom of the rose,  
 Till, drunk with its own wine, and overfull  
 Of sweetness, and in smelling of itself,  
 It fall on its own thorns—if this be true,—  
 And that way my wish leads me evermore  
 Still to believe it, 't is so sweet a thought.—  
 Why in the utter stillness of the soul  
 Doth question'd memory answer not, nor  
   tell  
 Of this our earliest, our closest-drawn,  
 Most loveliest, earthly-heavenliest har-  
   mony?

O blossom'd portal of the lonely house,  
 Green prelude, April promise, glad new-  
   year  
 Of Being, which with earliest violets  
 And lavish carol of clear-throated larks  
 Fill'd all the March of life!—I will not  
   speak of thee;  
 These have not seen thee, these can never  
   know thee,  
 They cannot understand me. Pass we  
   then  
 A term of eighteen years. Ye would but  
   laugh  
 If I should tell you how I hoard in thought  
 The faded rhymes and scraps of ancient  
   crones,  
 Gray relics of the nurseries of the world,  
 Which are as gems set in my memory,  
 Because she learnt them with me; or what  
   use  
 To know her father left us just before  
 The daffodil was blown? or how we found  
 The dead man cast upon the shore? All  
   this  
 Seems to the quiet daylight of your minds  
 But cloud and smoke, and in the dark of  
   mine

Is traced with flame. Move with me to  
 the event,

There came a glorious morning, such a  
   one  
 As dawns but once a season. Mercury  
 On such a morning would have flung him-  
   self  
 From cloud to cloud, and swum with bal-  
   anced wings  
 To some tall mountain: when I said to  
   her,  
 "A day for Gods to stoop," she answered,  
   "Ay,  
 And men to soar:" for as that other  
   gazed,  
 Shading his eyes till all the fiery cloud,  
 The prophet and the chariot and the  
   steeds,  
 Suck'd into oneness like a little star  
 Were drunk into the inmost blue, we  
   stood,  
 When first we came from out the pines at  
   noon,  
 With hands for eaves, uplooking and al-  
   most  
 Waiting to see some blessed shape in  
   heaven,  
 So bathed we were in brilliance. Never  
   yet  
 Before or after have I known the spring  
 Pour with such sudden deluges of light  
 Into the middle summer; for that day  
 Love, rising, shook his wings, and charged  
   the winds  
 With spiced May-sweets from bound to  
   bound, and blew  
 Fresh fire into the sun, and from within  
 Burst thro' the heated buds, and sent his  
   soul  
 Into the songs of birds, and touch'd far-off  
 His mountain-altars, his high hills, with  
   flame  
 Milder and purer.

Thro' the rocks we wound:  
 The great pine shook with lonely sounds  
   of joy  
 That came on the sea-wind. As mountain  
   streams  
 Our bloods ran free: the sunshine seem'd  
   to brood  
 More warmly on the heart than on the  
   brow.  
 We often paused, and, looking back, we  
   saw  
 The clefts and openings in the mountains  
   fill'd  
 With the blue valley and the glistening  
   brooks,  
 And all the low dark groves, a land of love!  
 A land of promise, a land of memory,  
 A land of promise flowing with the milk  
 And honey of delicious memories!  
 And down to sea, and far as eye could ken,  
 Each way from verge to verge a Holy  
   Land,  
 Still growing holier as you near'd the bay,  
 For there the Temple stood.

When we had reach'd  
 The grassy platform on some hill, I stoop'd,

gather'd the wild herbs, and for her  
brows  
And mine made garlands of the selfsame  
flower,  
Which she took smiling, and with my work  
thus  
Crown'd her clear forehead. Once or twice  
she told me  
(For I remember all things) to let grow  
The flowers that run poison in their veins.  
She said, "The evil flourish in the world."  
Then playfully she gave herself the lie—  
"Nothing in nature is unbeautiful;  
So, brother, pluck, and spare not." So I  
wove  
Ev'n the dull-blooded poppy-stem, "whose  
flower,  
Hued with the scarlet of a fierce sunrise,  
Like to the wild youth of an evil prince,  
Is without sweetness, but who crowns him-  
self  
Above the secret poisons of his heart  
In his old age." A graceful thought of  
hers  
Grav'n on my fancy! And oh, how like  
a nymph,  
A stately mountain nymph, she look'd!  
how native  
Unto the hills she trod on! While I gazed,  
My coronal slowly disentwined itself  
And fell between us both; tho' while I  
gazed  
My spirit leap'd as with those thrills of  
bliss  
That strike across the soul in prayer, and  
show us  
That we are surely heard. Methought a  
light  
Burst from the garland I had wov'n, and  
stood  
A solid glory on her bright black hair;  
A light methought broke from her dark,  
dark eyes,  
And shot itself into the singing winds;  
A mystic light flash'd ev'n from her white  
robe  
As from a glass in the sun, and fell about  
My footsteps on the mountains.

Last we came

To what our people call "The Hill of Woe."  
A bridge is there, that, look'd at from be-  
neath,  
Seems but a cobweb filament to link  
The yawning of an earthquake-cloven  
chasm.  
And thence one night, when all the winds  
were loud,  
A woful man (for so the story went)  
Had thrust his wife and child and dash'd  
himself  
Into the dizzy depth below. Below,  
Fierce in the strength of far descent, a  
stream  
Flies with a shatter'd foam along the  
chasm.

The path was perilous, loosely strewn  
with crags:  
We mounted slowly; yet to both there  
came

The joy of life in steepness overcome,  
And victories of ascent, and looking down  
On all that had look'd down on us; and  
joy  
In breathing nearer heaven; and joy to  
me,  
High over all the azure-circled earth,  
To breathe with her as if in heaven itself;  
And more than joy that I to her became  
Her guardian and her angel, raising her  
Still higher, past all peril, until she saw  
Beneath her feet the region far away,  
Beyond the nearest mountain's bosky  
brows,  
Burst into open prospect—heath and hill,  
And hollow lined and wooded to the lips,  
And steep-down walls of battlemented  
rock  
Gilded with broom, or shatter'd into spires,  
And glory of broad waters interfused,  
Whence rose as it were breach and steam  
of gold,  
And over all the great wood rioting  
And climbing, streak'd or starr'd at inter-  
vals  
With falling brook or blossom'd bush—  
and last,  
Framing the mighty landscape to the west,  
A purple range of mountain-cones, be-  
tween  
Whose interspaces gush'd in blinding  
bursts  
The incorporate blaze of sun and sea.  
At length  
Descending from the point and standing  
both,  
There on the tremulous bridge, that from  
beneath  
Had seem'd a gossamer filament up in air,  
We paused amid the splendor. All the  
west  
And e'en unto the middle south was ribb'd  
And barr'd with bloom on bloom. The  
sun below,  
Held for a space 'twixt cloud and wave,  
shower'd down  
Rays of a mighty circle, weaving over  
That various wilderness a tissue of light  
Unparallel'd. On the other side, the moon,  
Half melted into thin blue air, stood still,  
And pale and fibrous as a wither'd leaf,  
Nor yet endured in presence of His eyes  
To indue his lustre; most unlover-like,  
Since in his absence full of light and joy,  
And giving light to others. But this most,  
Next to her presence whom I loved so well,  
Spoke loudly even into my inmost heart  
As to my outward hearing; the loud  
stream,  
Forth issuing from his portals in the crag  
(A visible link unto the home of my heart),  
Ran amber toward the west, and nigh the  
sea  
Parting my own loved mountains was re-  
ceived,  
Shorn of its strength, into the sympathy  
Of that small bay, which out to open main  
Glow'd intermingling close beneath the  
sun.  
Spirit of Love! that little hour was bound

Shut in from Time, and dedicate to thee;  
Thy fires from heaven had touch'd it, and the earth  
They fell on became hallow'd evermore.

We turn'd: our eyes met: hers were bright, and mine  
Were dim with floating tears, that shot the sunset

In lightnings round me; and my name was borne  
Upon her breath. Henceforth my name has been

A hallow'd memory like the names of old,  
A centred, glory-circled memory,  
And a peculiar treasure, brooking not  
Exchange or currency: and in that hour  
A hope flow'd round me, like a golden mist  
Charm'd amid eddies of melodious airs,  
A moment, ere the onward whirlwind  
shatter it,

Waver'd and floated—which was less than  
Hope,  
Because it lack'd the power of perfect  
Hope;

But which was more and higher than all  
Hope,  
Because all other Hope had lower aim;  
Even that this name to which her gracious  
lips

Did lend such gentle utterance, this one  
name,

In some obscure hereafter, might in-  
wreath

(How lovelier, nobler then!) her life, her  
love,

With my life, love, soul, spirit, and heart  
and strength.

"Brother," she said, "let this be call'd  
henceforth

The Hill of Hope;" and I replied, "O  
sister,

My will is one with thine; the Hill of  
Hope."

Nevertheless, we did not change the name.

I did not speak; I could not speak my  
love.

Love lieth deep: Love dwells not in lip-  
depths.

Love wraps his wings on either side the  
heart,

Constraining it with kisses close and warm,  
Absorbing all the incense of sweet thoughts  
So that they pass not to the shrine of  
sound.

Else had the life of that delighted hour  
Drunk in the largeness of the utterance  
Of Love; but how should Earthly meas-  
ure mete

The Heavently-unmeasured or unlimited  
Love.

Who scarce can tune his high majestic  
sense

Unto the thunder-song that wheels the  
spheres,

Scarce living in the Æolian harmony,  
And flowing odor of the spacious air,

Scarce housed within the circle of this  
Earth.

Be cabin'd up in words and syllables,  
Which pass with that which breathes  
them? Sooner Earth

Might go round Heaven, and the strait  
girth of Time

Inswathe the fullness of Eternity,  
Than language grasp the infinite of Love.

O day which did enwomb that happy  
hour,

Thou art blessed in the years, divinest  
day!

O Genius of that hour which dost uphold  
Thy coronal of glory like a God,  
Amid thy melancholy mates far-seen,  
Who walk before thee, ever turning round  
To gaze upon thee till their eyes are dim  
With dwelling on the light and depth of  
thine,

Thy name is ever worshipp'd among  
hours!

Had I died then, I had not seem'd to die,  
For bliss stood round me like the light of  
Heaven—

Had I died then, I had not known the  
death;

Yea had the Power from whose right  
hand the light

Of Life issueth, and from whose left hand  
floweth

The Shadow of Death, perennial efflu-  
ences,

Whereof to all that draw the wholesome  
air

Somewhile the one must overflow the  
other;

Then had he stemm'd my day with night,  
and driven

My current to the fountain whence it  
sprang,—

Even his own abiding excellence—

On me, methinks, that shock of gloom  
had fall'n

Unfelt, and in this glory I had merged

The other, like the sun I gazed upon,  
Which seeming for the moment due to  
death,

And dipping his head low beneath the  
verge,

Yet bearing round about him his own day,  
In confidence of unabated strength,

Steppeth from Heaven to Heaven, from  
light to light,

And holdeth his undimmed forehead far  
Into a clearer zenith, pure of cloud.

We trod the shadow of the downward  
hill;

We past from light to dark. On the other  
side

Is scoop'd a cavern and a mountain hall,  
Which none have fathom'd. If you go  
far in

(The country people rumor) you may hear  
The moaning of the woman and the child,

Shut in the secret chambers of the rock.  
I too have heard a sound—perchance of  
streams

Running far on within its inmost halls,  
The home of darkness; but the cavern-  
mouth,

Half overtrilled with a wanton weed,  
Gives birth to a brawling brook, that  
passing lightly

Adown a natural stair of tangled roots,  
Is presently received in a sweet grave  
Of eglantines, a place of burial  
Far lovelier than its cradle; for unseen,  
But taken with the sweetness of the place,  
It makes a constant bubbling melody  
That drowns the nearer echoes. Lower

down  
Spreads out a little lake, that, flooding,  
leaves

Low banks of yellow sand; and from the  
woods

That belt it rise three dark, tall cypresses,—  
Three cypresses, symbols of mortal woe,  
That men plant over graves.

Hither we came,  
And sitting down upon the golden moss,  
Held converse sweet and low—low con-  
verse sweet,  
In which our voices bore least part. The  
wind

Told a love tale beside us, how he woo'd  
The waters, and the waters answering  
lisp'd

To kisses of the wind, that, sick with love,  
Fainted at intervals, and grew again  
To utterance of passion. Ye cannot shape  
Fancy so fair as is this memory.

Methought all excellence that ever was  
Had drawn herself from many thousand  
years,

And all the separate Edens of this earth,  
To centre in this place and time. I  
listen'd,

And her words stole with most prevailing  
sweetness

Into my heart, as thronging fancies come  
To boys and girls when summer days are  
new,

And soul and heart and body are all at  
ease:

What marvel my Camilla told me all?  
It was so happy an hour, so sweet a place,  
And I was as the brother of her blood,  
And by that name I moved upon her  
breath;

Dear name, which had too much of near-  
ness in it

And heralded the distance of this time!

At first her voice was very sweet and low,  
As if she were afraid of utterance;  
But in the onward current of her speech  
(As echoes of the hollow-banked brooks  
Are fashion'd by the channel which they  
keep),

Her words did of their meaning borrow  
sound,

Her cheek did catch the color of her words.  
I heard and trembled, yet I could but hear;  
My heart paused—my raised eyelids would  
not fall,

But still I kept my eyes upon the sky.  
I seem'd the only part of Time stood still,  
And saw the motion of all other things;

While her words, syllable by syllable,  
Like water, drop by drop, upon my ear  
Fell; and I wish'd, yet wish'd her not to  
speak;

But she spake on, for I did name no wish.  
What marvel my Camilla told me all  
Her maiden dignities of Hope and Love—  
"Perchance," she said, "return'd." Even  
then the stars

Did tremble in their stations as I gazed;  
But she spake on, for I did name no wish,  
No wish—no hope. Hope was not wholly  
dead,

But breathing hard at the approach of  
Death,—

Camilla, my Camilla, who was mine  
No longer in the dearest sense of mine—  
For all the secret of her inmost heart.

And all the maiden empire of her mind,  
Lay like a map before me, and I saw  
There, where I hoped myself to reign as  
king,

There, where that day I crown'd myself  
as king,

There in my realm and even on my throne,  
*Another!* Then it seem'd as tho' a link  
Of some tight chain within my inmost  
frame

Was riven in twain: that life I heeded not  
Flow'd from me, and the darkness of the  
grave,

The darkness of the grave and utter night,  
Did swallow up my vision; at her feet,  
Even the feet of her I loved, I fell,  
Smit with exceeding sorrow unto Death.

Then had the earth beneath me yawning  
cloven

With such a sound as when an iceberg  
splits

From cope to base—had Heaven from all  
her doors,

With all her golden thresholds clashing,  
roll'd

Her heaviest thunder—I had lain as dead,  
Mute, blind and motionless as then I lay;  
Dead, for henceforth there was no life for  
me!

Mute, for henceforth what use were words  
to me!

Blind, for the day was as the night to  
me!

The night to me was kinder than the day;  
The night in pity took away my day,  
Because my grief as yet was newly born  
Of eyes too weak to look upon the light;  
And thro' the hasty notice of the ear  
Frail Life was startled from the tender  
love

Of him she brooded over. Would I had  
lain

Until the plaited ivy-tress had wound  
Round my worn limbs, and the wild brier  
had driven

Its knotted thorns thro' my unpaining  
brows,

Leaning its roses on my faded eyes.  
The wind had blown above me, and the  
rain

Had fall'n upon me, and the gilded snake.

Had nestled in this bosom-throne of Love,  
But I had been at rest for evermore.

Long time entrancement held me, All  
too soon  
Life (like a wanton too-officious friend,  
Who will not *hear* denial, vain and rude  
With proffer of unwished-for services)  
Entering all the avenues of sense  
Past thro' into his citadel, the brain,  
With hated warmth of apprehensiveness.  
And first the chillness of the sprinkled  
brook  
Smote on my brows, and then I seem'd to  
hear  
Its murmur, as the drowning seaman  
hears,  
Who with his head below the surface  
dropt  
Listens the muffled booming indistinct  
Of the confused floods, and dimly knows  
His head shall rise no more: and then  
came in  
The white light of the weary moon above,  
Diffused and molten into flaky cloud.  
Was my sight drunk that it did shape to me  
Him who should own that name? Were  
it not well  
If so be that the echo of that name  
Ringing within the fancy had updrawn  
A fashion and a phantasm of the form  
It should attach to? Phantom!—had the  
ghastliest  
That ever lusted for a body, sucking  
The foul steam of the grave to thicken by  
it,  
There in the shuddering moonlight brought  
its face  
And what it has for eyes as close to mine  
As he did—better that than his, than he  
The friend, the neighbor, Lionel, the be-  
loved,  
The loved, the lover, the happy Lionel,  
The low-voiced, tender-spirited Lionel,  
All joy, to whom my agony was a joy.  
Oh how her choice did leap forth from his  
eyes!  
Oh how her love did clothe itself in smiles  
About his lips! and—not one moment's  
grace—  
Then when the effect weigh'd seas upon  
my head  
To come my way! to twit me with the  
cause!

Was not the land as free thro' all her  
ways  
To him as me? Was not his wont to walk  
Between the going light and growing  
night?  
Had I not learnt my loss before he came?  
Could that be more because he came my  
way?  
Why should he not come my way if he  
would?  
And yet to-night, to-night—when all my  
wealth  
Flash'd from me in a moment and I fell  
Beggar'd forever—why should he come  
my way

Robed in those robes of light I must ~~and~~  
wear,  
With that great crown of beams about  
his brows—  
Come like an angel to a damned soul,  
To tell him of the bliss he had with God—  
Come like a careless and a greedy heir  
That scarce can wait the reading of the  
will  
Before he takes possession? Was mine a  
mood  
To be invaded rudely, and not rather  
A sacred, secret, unapproached woe,  
Unspeakable? I was shut up with Grief;  
She took the body of my past delight,  
Narded and swathed and balm'd it for  
herself,  
And laid it in a sepulchre of rock  
Never to rise again. I was led mute  
Into her temple like a sacrifice;  
I was the High Priest in her holiest place,  
Not to be loudly broken in upon.

O friend, thoughts deep and heavy as  
these well nigh  
O'erbore the limits of my brain; but he  
Bent o'er me, and my neck his arm up-  
stay'd.  
I thought it was an adder's fold, and once  
I strove to disengage myself, but fail'd,  
Being so feeble: she bent above me, too;  
Wan was her cheek; for whatsoever of  
blight  
Lives in the dewy touch of pity had made  
The red rose there a pale one—and her  
eyes—  
I saw the moonlight glitter on their  
tears—  
And some few drops of that distressful  
rain  
Fell on my face, and her long ringlets  
moved,  
Drooping and beaten by the breeze, and  
brush'd  
My fallen forehead in their to and fro,  
For in the sudden anguish of her heart  
Loosed from their simple thrall they had  
flow'd abroad,  
And floated on and parted round her neck,  
Mantling her form half way. She, when  
I woke,  
Something she ask'd, I know not what,  
and ask'd,  
Unanswer'd, since I spake not; for the  
sound  
Of that dear voice so musically low,  
And now first heard with any sense of  
pain,  
As it had taken life away before,  
Choked all the syllables, that strove to rise  
From my full heart.

The blissful lover, too,  
From his great hoard of happiness distill'd  
Some drops of solace; like a vain rich  
man,  
That, having always prosper'd in the  
world,  
Folding his hands, deals comfortable  
words  
To hearts wounded forever; yet, in truth,

Fair speech was his and delicate of phrase,  
Falling in whispers on the sense, address'd  
More to the inward than the outward ear,  
As rain of the midsummer midnight soft,  
Scarce heard, recalling fragrance and the  
green

Of the dead spring: but mine was wholly  
dead,

No bud, no leaf, no flower, no fruit for  
me.

Yet who had done, or who had suffer'd  
wrong?

And why was I to darken their pure love,  
If, as I found, they two did love each  
other,

Because my own was "darken'd"? Why  
was I

To cross between their happy star and  
them?

To stand a shadow by their shining doors,  
And vex them with my darkness? Did I  
love her?

Ye know that I did love her; to this pre-  
sent

My full-orb'd love has waned not. Did I  
love her,

And could I look upon her tearful eyes?  
What had *she* done to weep? Why should  
*she* weep?

O innocent of spirit—let my heart  
Break rather—whom the gentlest airs of  
Heaven

Should kiss with an unwonted gentleness.  
Her love did murder mine? What then?  
She deem'd

I wore a brother's mind: she call'd me  
brother:

She told me all her love: she shall not  
weep.

The brightness of a burning thought,  
awhile

In battle with the glooms of my dark  
will,

Moon-like emerged, and to itself lit up  
There on the depth of an unfathom'd woe  
Reflex of action. Starting up at once,  
As from a dismal dream of my own death,  
I, for I loved her, lost my love in Love:  
I, for I loved her, graspt the hand she  
lov'd,

And laid it in her own, and sent my cry  
Thro' the blank night to Him who loving  
made

The happy and the unhappy love, that He  
Would hold the hand of blessing over  
them,

Hionel, the happy, and her, and her, his  
bride!

Let them so love that men and boys may  
say,

"Lo! how they love each other!" till  
their love

Shall ripen to a proverb, unto all  
Known, when their faces are forgot in the  
land—

One golden dream of love, from which  
may death

Awake them with heaven's music in a life  
More living to some happier happiness,

Swallowing its precedent in victory.  
And as for me, Camilla, as for me,—  
The dew of tears is an unwholesome dew,  
They will but sicken the sick plant the  
more.

Deem that I love thee but as brothers do,  
So shalt thou love me still as sisters do;

Or if thou dream aught farther, dream  
but how

I could have loved thee, had there been  
none else

To love as lovers, loved again by thee.

Or this, or somewhat like to this, I  
spake,

When I beheld her weep so ruefully;  
For sure my love should ne'er indue the  
front

And mask of Hate, who lives on others'  
moans.

Shall Love pledge Hatred in her bitter  
draughts,

And batten on her poisons? Love forbid!  
Love passeth not the threshold of cold

Hate,  
And Hate is strange beneath the roof of  
Love.

O Love, if thou be'st Love, dry up these  
tears

Shed for the love of Love; for tho' mine  
image,

The subject of thy power, be cold in her,  
Yet, like cold snow, it melteth in the  
source

Of these sad tears, and feeds their down-  
ward flow.

So Love, arraign'd to judgment and to  
death,

Received unto himself a part of blame,  
Being guiltless, as an innocent prisoner,

Who, when the woful sentence hath been  
past,

And all the clearness of his fame hath  
gone

Beneath the shadow of the curse of man,  
First falls asleep in swoon, wherefrom

awaked,  
And looking round upon his tearful

friends,  
Forthwith and in his agony conceives

A shameful sense as of a cleaving crime—  
For whence without some guilt should

such grief be?

So died that hour, and fell into the  
abysm

Of forms outworn, but not to me outworn,  
Who never hail'd another—was there one?

There might be one—one other, worth the  
life

That made it sensible. So that hour died  
Like odor rapt into the winged wind

Borne into alien lands and far away.

There be some hearts so airily built, that  
they,

They—when their love is wreck'd—if Love  
can wreck—

On that sharp ridge of utmost doom ride  
highly

Above the perilous seas of Change and  
 Chance;  
 Nay, more, hold out the lights of cheer-  
 fulness;  
 As the tall ship, that many a dreary year  
 Knit to some dismal sand-bank far at sea,  
 All thro' the livelong hours of utter dark,  
 Showers slanting light upon the dolorous  
 wave.  
 For me—what light, what gleam on the e  
 black ways  
 Where Love could walk with banish'd  
 Hope no more?

It was ill done to part you, Sisters fair;  
 Love's arms were wreath'd about the  
 neck of Hope,  
 And Hope kiss'd Love, and Love drew in  
 her breath  
 In that close kiss, and drank her whisper'd  
 tales.  
 They said that Love would die when Hope  
 was gone,  
 And Love mourn'd long, and sorrow'd  
 after Hope;  
 At last she sought out Memory, and they  
 trod  
 The same old paths where Love had  
 walk'd with Hope  
 And Memory fed the soul of Love with  
 tears.

## II.

FROM that time forth I would not see her  
 more;  
 But many weary moons I lived alone—  
 Alone, and in the heart of the great for-  
 est.  
 Sometimes upon the hills beside the sea  
 All day I watch'd the floating isles of  
 shade,  
 And sometimes on the shore, upon the  
 sands  
 Insensibly I drew her name, until  
 The meaning of the letters shot into  
 My br in; anon the wanton billow wash'd  
 Them over, till they faded like my love.  
 The hollow caverns heard me—the black  
 brooks  
 Of the mid-forest heard me—the soft  
 winds,  
 Laden with thistle down and seeds of  
 flowers,  
 Paused in their course to hear me, for my  
 voice  
 Was all of thee: the merry linnet knew  
 me,  
 The squirrel knew me, and the dragon-  
 fly,  
 Shot by me like a flash of purple fire.  
 The rough brier tore my bleeding palms;  
 the hemlock  
 Brow-high, did strike my forehead as I  
 past;  
 Yet trod I not the wild flower in my path,  
 Nor bruised the wild bird's egg.  
 Was this the end?  
 Why grew we then together in one plot?

Why fed we from one fountain? drew one  
 sun?  
 Why were our mothers branches of one  
 stem?  
 Why were we one in all things, save in  
 that  
 Where to have been one had been the cope  
 and crown  
 Of all I hoped and fear'd?—if that same  
 nearness  
 Were father to this distance, and that  
 one  
 Vauntcourier to this double? if Affection  
 Living slew Love, and Sympathy hew'd  
 out  
 The bosom-sepulchre of Sympathy?

Chiefly I sought the cavern and the hill  
 Where last we roam'd together, for the  
 sound  
 Of the loud stream was pleasant, and the  
 wind  
 Came wooingly with woodbine smells.  
 Sometimes  
 All day I sat within the cavern-mouth,  
 Fixing my eyes on those three cypress-  
 cones  
 That spired above the wood; and with  
 mad hand  
 Tearing the bright leaves of the ivy-screen,  
 I cast them in the noisy brook beneath,  
 And watch'd them till they vanish'd from  
 my sight  
 Beneath the bower of wreathed eglan-  
 tines:  
 And all the fragments of the living rock  
 (Huge blocks, which some old trembling  
 of the world  
 Had lo sen'd from the mountain, till they  
 fell  
 Half digging their own graves) these in  
 my agony  
 Did I make bare of all the golden moss,  
 Wherewith the dashing runnel in the  
 spring  
 Had liveried them all over. In my brain  
 The spirit seem'd to flag from thought to  
 thought,  
 As moonlight wandering thro' a mist: my  
 blood  
 Crept like marsh drains thro' all my lan-  
 guid limbs;  
 The motions of my heart seem'd far with-  
 in me,  
 Unfrequent, low, as tho' it told its pulses;  
 And yet it shook me, that my frame would  
 shudder,  
 As if 't were drawn asunder by the rack.  
 But over the deep graves of Hope and  
 Fear,  
 And all the broken palaces of the Past,  
 Brooded one master-passion evermore,  
 Like to a low hung and a fiery sky  
 Above some fair metropolis, earth  
 shock'd,—  
 Hung round with ragged rims and burn-  
 ing folds,—  
 Embodying all with wild and woful hues  
 Great hills of ruins, and collaps'd masses  
 Of thunder-shaken columns indistinct,

And fused together in the tyrannous  
light—  
Ruins, the ruin of all my life and me !

Sometimes I thought Camilla was no  
more,  
Some one had told she was dead, and ask'd  
me  
If I would see her burial : then I seem'd  
To rise, and through the forest-shadow  
borne  
With more than mortal swiftness, I ran  
down

The steepy sea-bank, till I came upon  
The rear of a procession, curving round  
The silver-sheeted bay : in front of which  
Six stately virgins, all in white, upbore  
A broad earth-sweeping pall of whitest  
lawn,

Wreathed round the bier with garlands ;  
in the distance,

From out the yellow woods upon the hill  
Look'd forth the summit and the pinnacles  
Of a gray steeple—thence at intervals  
A low bell tolling. All the pagantray,  
Save those six virgins which upheld the  
bier,

Were stoled from head to foot in flowing  
black ;

One walk'd abreast with me, and veil'd  
his brow,

And he was loud in weeping and in praise  
Of her he follow'd : a strong sympathy  
Shook all my soul : I flung myself upon  
him

In tears and cries : I told him all my love,  
How I had loved her from the first :  
whereat

He shrank and howl'd, and from his brow  
drew back

His hand to push me from him ; and the  
face,

The very face and form of Lionel  
Flash'd thro' my eyes into my innermost  
brain,

And at his feet I seemed to faint and fall,  
To fall and die away. I could not rise  
Albeit I strove to follow. They past on,  
The lordly Phantasms ! in their floating  
folds

They past and were no more : but I had  
fallen

Prone by the dashing runnel on the grass,

Always the inaudible invisible thought  
Artificer and subject, lord and slave,  
Shaped by the audible and visible,  
Moulded the audible and visible ;  
All crisped sounds of wave and leaf and  
wind

Flatter'd the fancy of my fading brain ;  
The cloud-pavilion'd element, the wood,  
The mountain, the three cypresses, the  
cave,

Storm, sunset, glows and glories of the  
moon

Below black firs, when silent-creeping  
winds

Laid the long night in silver streaks and  
bars,

Were wrought into the tissue of my  
dream :

The moanings in the forest, the loud  
brook,

Cries of the partridge like a rusty key  
Turn'd in a lock, owl-whop and dor-  
hawk-whir

Awoke me not, but were a part of sleep,  
And voices in the distance calling to me  
And in my vision bidding me dream on,  
Like sounds without the twilight realm of  
dreams,

Which wander round the bases of the  
hills,

And murmur at the low-dropt eaves of  
sleep,

Half-entering the portals. Oftentimes  
The vision had fair prelude, in the end  
Opening on darkness, statey vestibules  
To caves and shows of Death : whether  
the mind,

With some revenge,—even to itself un-  
known,—

Made strange division of its suffering  
With her, whom to have suffering view'd  
had been

Extremest pain ; or that the clear-eyed  
Spirit,

Being blunted in the Present, grew at  
length

Prophetic and prescient of whate'er  
The Future had in store : or that which  
most

Enchains belief, the sorrow of my spirit  
Was of so wide a compass it took in  
All I had loved, and my dull agony,  
Ideally to her transferr'd, became  
Anguish intolerable.

The day waned ;

Alone I sat with her : about my brow  
Her warm breath floated in the utterance  
Of silver-chorded tones : her lips were  
sunder'd

With smiles of tranquil bliss, which  
broke in light

Like morning from her eyes—her elo-  
quent eyes

(As I have seen them many a hundred  
times),

Filled all with pure clear fire, thro' mine  
down rain'd

Their spirit-searching splendors. As a  
vision

Unto a haggard prisoner, iron-stay'd  
In damp and dismal dungeons under-  
ground,

Confined on points of faith, when strength  
is shock'd

With torment, and expectancy of worse  
Upon the morrow, thro' the ragged walls,  
All unawares before his half-shut eyes,  
Comes in upon him in the dead of night,  
And with the excess of sweetness and of  
awe,

Makes the heart tremble, and the sight  
run over

Upon his steely gyves ; so those fair eyes  
Shone on my darkness, forms which ever  
stood

Within the magic cirque of memory,

Invisible but deathless, waiting still  
The edict of the will to re-assume  
The semblance of those rare realities  
Of which they were the mirrors. Now the  
light

Which was their life bursts through the  
cloud of thought  
Keen, irrepressible.

It was a room

Within the summer-house of which I  
spoke,

Hung round with paintings of the sea,  
and one

A vessel in mid-ocean, her heaved prow  
Clambering, the mast bent and the ravin  
wind

In her sail roaring. From the outer day,  
Betwixt the close-set ivies came a broad  
And solid beam of isolated light,  
Crowded with driving atomies, and fell  
Slanting upon that picture, from prime  
youth

Well known well loved. She drew it long  
ago

Forth-gazing on the waste and open sea,  
One morning when the upblown billow  
ran

Shoreward beneath red clouds, and I had  
pour'd

Into the shadowing pencil's naked forms  
Color and life: it was a bond and seal  
Of friendship, spoken of with tearful  
smiles:

A monument of childhood and of love;  
The poesy of childhood; my lost love  
Symbol'd in storm. We gazed on it to-  
gether

In mute and glad remembrance, and each  
heart

Grew closer to the other, and the eye  
Was riveted and charm-bound, gazing like  
The Indian on a still-eyed snake, low  
couch'd—

A beauty which is death; when all at  
once

That painted vessel, as with inner life,  
Began to heave upon that painted sea;  
An earthquake, my loud heart-beats,  
made the ground

Reel under us, and all at once, soul, life  
And breath and motion, past and flow'd  
away

To those unreal billows: round and round  
A whirlwind caught and bore us; mighty  
gyres

Rapid and vast, of hissing spray wind-  
driven

Far thro' the dizzy dark. Aloud she  
shriek'd;

My heart was cloven with pain; I wound  
my arms

About her: we whirl'd giddily; the wind  
Sung; but I clasp'd her without fear: her  
weight

Shrank in my grasp, and over my dim  
eyes,

And parted lips which drank her breath,  
down hung

The jaws of Death: I, groaning from me  
lung

Her empty phantom: all the sway and  
whirl  
Of the storm dropt to windless calm, and I  
Down welter'd thro' the dark ever and  
ever.

### III.

I CAME one day and sat among the stones  
Strewn in the entry of the moaning cave;  
A morning air, sweet after rain, ran over  
The rippling levels of the lake, and blew  
Coolness and moisture and all smells of  
bud

And foliage from the dark and dripping  
woods

Upon my fever'd brows that shook and  
throbb'd

From temple unto temple. To what  
height

The day had grown I know not. Then  
came on me

The hollow tolling of the bell, and all  
The vision of the bier. As heretofore  
I walk'd behind with one who veil'd his  
brow.

Methought by slow degrees the sullen bell  
Toll'd quicker, and the breakers on the  
shore

Sloped into louder surf: those that went  
with me,

And those that held the bier before my  
face,

Moved with one spirit round about the  
bay,

Trod swifter steps; and while I walk'd  
with these

In marvel at that gradual change, I  
thought

Four bells instead of one began to ring,  
Four merry bells, four merry marriage  
bells,

In clanging cadence jangling peal on  
peal—

A long loud clash of rapid marriage bells.  
Then those who led the van, and those in  
rear,

Rush'd into dance, and like wild Baccha-  
nals

Fled onward to the steeple in the woods:  
I, too, was borne along and felt the blast  
Beat on my heated eyelids: all at once

The front rank made a sudden halt; the  
bells

Lapsed into frightful stillness; the surge  
fell

From thunder into whispers; those six  
maids

With shrieks and ringing laughter on the  
sand

Threw down the bier; the woods upon  
the hill

Waved with a sudden gust that sweeping  
down

Took the edges of the pall, and blew it far  
Until it hung, a little silver cloud

Over the sounding seas: I turn'd: my  
heart

Shrank in me, like a snow-flake in the  
hand,

Waiting to see the settled countenance  
Of her I lov'd, adorn'd with fading flow-  
ers.

But she from out her death-like chrysalis,  
She from her bier, as into fresher life,  
My sister, and my cousin, and my love,  
Leapt lightly clad in bridal white—her  
hair

Studded with one rich Provence rose—a  
light  
Of smiling welcome round her lips—her  
eyes

And cheeks as bright as when she climb'd  
the hill.

One hand she reach'd to those that came  
behind,

And while I mused nōr yet endured to  
take

So rich a prize, the man who stood with  
me

Stept gayly forward, throwing down his  
robes,

And clasp't her hand in his: again the  
bells

Jangled and clang'd: again the stormy  
surf

Crash'd in the shingle: and the whirling  
rout

Led by those two rush'd into dance, and  
fled

Wind-footed to the steeple in the woods,  
Till they were swallow'd in the leafy  
bowers,

And I stood sole beside the vacant bier.

There, there, my latest vision—then the  
event!

## IV.

## THE GOLDEN SUPPER.

(*Another speaks.*)

He files the event: he leaves the event to  
me:

Poor Julian—how he rush'd away; the  
bells,

Those marriage bells, echoing in ear and  
heart—

But cast a parting glance at me, you saw,  
As who should say "Continue." Well, he  
had

One golden hour—of triumph shall I say?  
Solace at least—before he left his home.

Would you had seen him in that hour of  
his!

He moved thro' all of it majestically—  
Restrain'd himself quite to the close—but  
now—

Whether they *were* his lady's marriage  
bells,

Or prophets of them in his fantasy,  
I never asked: but Lionel and the girl  
Were wedded, and our Julian came again  
Back to his mother's house among the  
pines.

But these, their gloom, the mountains and  
the bay

The whole land weigh'd him down as  
Ætna does

The Giant of Mythology: he would go,  
Would leave the land forever, and had  
gone

Surely, but for a whisper, "Go not yet,"  
Some warning—sent divinely, as it seem'd  
By that which follow'd, but of this I deem  
As of the visions that he told—the event  
Glanced back upon them in his after-life,  
And partly made them, tho' he knew it  
not.

And thus he stayed and would not look  
at her—

No, not for months; but, when the elev-  
enth moon

After their marriage lit the lover's bay,  
Heard yet once more the tolling bell, and  
said,

Would you could toll me out of life, but  
found—

All softly as his mother broke it to him—  
A crueller reason than a crazy ear,

For that low knell tolling his lady dead—  
Dead—and had lain three days without a  
pulse;

All that look'd on her had pronounced her  
dead.

And so they bore her (for in Julian's land  
They never nail a dumb head up in elm).

Bore her free faced to the free airs of  
heaven,

And laid her in the vault of her own kin.

What did he then? not die: he is here  
and hale

Not plunge head-foremost from the moun-  
tain there,

And leave the name of Lover's Leap: not  
he:

He knew the meaning of the whisper now,  
Thought that he knew it. "This, I stayed  
for this;

O love, I have not seen you for so long.

Now, now, will I go down into the grave,  
I will be all alone with all I love,

And kiss her on the lips. She is his no  
more:

The dead returns to me, and I go down  
To kiss the dead."

The fancy stirr'd him so  
He rose and went, and entering the dim  
vault,

And, making there a sudden light, beheld  
All round about him that which all will  
be.

The light was but a flash, and went again.  
Then at the far end of the vault he saw

His lady with the moonlight on her face;  
Her breast as in a shadow-prison, bars

Of black and bands of silver, which the  
moon

Struck from an open grating overhead  
High in the wall, and all the rest of her

Drown'd in the gloom and horror of the  
vault.

"It was my wish," he said, "to pass  
to sleep,

To rest, to be with her—till the great day  
 Peal'd on us with that music which rights  
 all,  
 And raised us hand in hand." And kneeling  
 there  
 Down in the dreadful dust that once was  
 man,  
 Dust, as he said, that once was loving  
 hearts,  
 Hearts that had beat with such a love as  
 mine—  
 Not such as mine, no, nor for such as  
 her—  
 He softly put his arm about her neck  
 And kissed her more than once, till help-  
 less death  
 And silence made him bold—nay, but I  
 wrong him,  
 He revered his dear lady even in  
 death;  
 But, placing his true hand upon her heart,  
 "O you warm heart," he moaned, "not  
 even death  
 Can chill you all at once:" then, starting,  
 thought  
 His dreams had come again. "Do I wake  
 or sleep?  
 Or am I made immortal, or my love  
 Mortal once more?" It beat—the heart  
 —it beat:  
 Faint—but it beat; at which his own be-  
 gan  
 To pulse with such a vehemence that it  
 drowned  
 The feebler motion underneath his hand.  
 But when at last his doubts were satisfied,  
 He raised her softly from the sepulchre,  
 And, wrapping her all over with the cloak  
 He came in, and now striding fast, and now  
 Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore  
 Holding his golden burden in his arms,  
 So bore her thro' the solitary land  
 Back to the mother's house where she was  
 born.

There the good mother's kindly minis-  
 tering,  
 With half a night's appliances, recall'd  
 Her fluttering life: she raised an eye that  
 ask'd  
 "Where?" till the things familiar to her  
 youth  
 Had made a silent answer: then she  
 spoke:  
 "Here! and how came I here?" and  
 learning it  
 (They told her somewhat rashly as I think)  
 At once began to wander and to wail,  
 "Ay, but you know that you must give me  
 back:  
 Send! bid him come;" but Lionel was  
 away—  
 Stung by his loss had vanished, none  
 knew where.  
 "He casts me out," she wept, "and goes"  
 —a wail  
 That seeming something, yet was nothing,  
 born  
 Not from believing mind, but shatter'd  
 nerve,

Yet haunting Julian, as her own reproof  
 At some precipitance in her burial.  
 Then, when her own true spirit had re-  
 turn'd,  
 "Oh yes, and you," she said, "and none  
 but you.  
 For you have given me life and love again,  
 And none but you yourself shall tell him  
 of it,  
 And you shall give me back when he re-  
 turns."  
 "Stay then a little," answered Julian,  
 "here,  
 And keep yourself, none knowing, to your-  
 self;  
 And I will do your will. I may not stay,  
 No, not an hour; but send me notice of  
 him  
 When he returns, and then will I return,  
 And I will make a solemn offering of you  
 To him you love." And faintly she re-  
 plied,  
 "And I will do *your* will, and none shall  
 know."

Not know? with such a secret to be  
 known!  
 But all their house was old and loved them  
 both,  
 And all the house had known the loves of  
 both;  
 Had died almost to serve them any way;  
 And all the land was waste and solitary:  
 And then he rode away; but after this,  
 An hour or two, Camilla's travail came  
 Upon her, and that day a boy was born,  
 Heir of his face and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode away,  
 And pausing at a hostel in a marsh,  
 There fever seized upon him: myself was  
 then  
 Travelling that land, and meant to rest an  
 hour;  
 And sitting down to such a base repast  
 It makes me angry yet to speak of it,  
 I heard a groaning overhead, and climb'd  
 The moulder'd stairs (for everything was  
 vile),  
 And in a loft, with none to wait on him,  
 Found, as it seem'd, a skeleton alone,  
 Raving of dead men's dust and beating  
 hearts.

A dismal hostel in a dismal land,  
 A flat malarian world of reed and rush!  
 But there from fever and my care of him  
 Sprang up a friendship that may help us  
 yet.  
 For while we roam'd along the dreary  
 coast,  
 And waited for her message, piece by piece  
 I learnt the drearier story of his life;  
 And, tho' he loved and honor'd Lionel,  
 Found that the sudden wail his lady made  
 Dwelt in his fancy, did he know her  
 worth,  
 Her beauty even? should he not be taught,  
 Ev'n by the price that others set upon it,  
 The value of that jewel he had to guard!

Suddenly came her notice, and we past,  
I with our lover, to his native bay.

This love is of the brain, the mind, the  
soul:  
That makes the sequel pure; tho' some of  
us

Beginning at the sequel know no more.  
Not such am I: and yet I say, the bird  
That will not hear my call, however sweet,  
But if my neighbor whistle answers him—  
What matter? there are others in the  
wood.

Yet when I saw her (and I thought him  
crazed,

Tho' not with such a craziness as needs  
A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of  
hers—

Oh! such dark eyes! and not her eyes  
alone,

But all from these to where she touch'd on  
earth—

For such a craziness as Julian's look'd  
No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she came  
To greet us, her young hero in her arms!  
"Kiss him," she said, "You gave me  
life again.

He, but for you, had never seen it once.  
His other father you! Kiss him, and  
then

Forgive him, if his name be Julian too."

Talk of lost hopes and broken heart!  
his own  
Sent such a flame into his face, I knew  
Some sudden vivid pleasure hit him there.

But he was all the more resolved to go,  
And sent at once to Lionel, praying him,  
By that great love they both had borne  
the dead,

To come and revel for one hour with him  
Before he left the land for evermore;  
And then to friends—they were not many  
—who lived

Scatteringly about that lonely land of his,  
And bade them to a banquet of farewells.

And Julian made a solemn feast: I  
never

Sat at a costlier; for all round his hall  
From column on to column, as in a wood,  
Not such as here—an equatorial one.  
Great garlands swung and blossom'd; and  
beneath,

Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of Art,  
Chalice and salver, wines that, Heaven  
knows when,

Had suck'd the fire of some forgotten sun,  
And kept it thro' a hundred years of  
gloom,

Yet glowing in a heart of ruby—cups  
Where nymph and god ran ever round in  
gold—

Others of glass as costly—some with gems  
Movable and resettable at will,  
And trebling all the rest in value—Ah  
heavens!

Why need I tell you all?—suffice to say  
That whatsoever such a house as his,  
And his was old, has in it rare or fair  
Was brought before the guest: and they,  
the guests,

Wonder'd at some strange light in Julian's  
eyes

(I told you that he had his golden hour),  
And such a feast, ill suited as it seem'd  
To such a time, to Lionel's loss and his,  
And that resolved self-exile from a land  
He never would revisit, such a feast  
So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n than  
rich—

But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the hall  
Two great funereal curtains, looping  
down,

Parted a little ere they met the floor,  
About a picture of his lady, taken  
Some years before, and falling hid the  
frame.

And just above the parting was a lamp:  
So the sweet figure folded round with night!  
Seem'd stepping out of darkness with a  
smile.

Well then—our solemn feast—we ate  
and drank,

And might—the wines being of such no-  
bleness—

Have jested also, but for Julian's eyes,  
And something weird and wild about it  
all:

What was it? for our lover seldom spoke,  
Scarce touch'd the meats; but ever and  
anon

A priceless goblet with a priceless wine  
Arising, show'd he drank beyond his use;  
And when the feast was near an end, he  
said:

"There is a custom in the Orient,  
friends—

I read of it in Persia—when a man  
Will honor those who feast with him, he  
brings

And shows them whatsoever he accounts  
Of all his treasures the most beautiful,  
Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may be.  
This custom"—

Pausing here a moment, all  
The guests broke in upon him with meet-  
ing hands

And cries about the banquet—"Beauti-  
ful!

Who could desire more beauty at a  
feast?"

The lover answer'd, "There is more  
than one

Here sitting who desires it. Laud me  
not

Before my time, but hear me to the close.  
This custom steps yet further when the  
guest

Is loved and honor'd to the uttermost.  
For after he hath shown him gems of  
gold,

He brings and is before him in rich  
guise  
That which is thrice as beautiful as these,  
The beauty that is dearest to his heart—  
'O my heart's lord, would I could show  
you,' he says,  
'Ev'n my heart, too.' And I propose to-  
night  
To show you what is dearest to my heart,  
And my heart to—

"But solve me first a doubt.  
I knew a man, nor many years ago:  
He had a faithful servant, one who loved  
His master more than all on earth beside.  
He falling sick, and seeming close on  
death,

His master would not wait until he died,  
But bade his menials bear him from the  
door,

And leave him in the public way to die.  
I knew another, not so long ago;  
Who found the dying servant, took him  
home,

And fed, and cherish'd him, and saved  
his life.

I ask you now, should this first master  
claim

His service, whom does it belong to? him  
Who thrust him out, or him who saved  
his life?"

This question, so flung down before the  
guests,

And balanced either way by each, at  
length

When some were doubtful how the law  
would hold,"

Was handed over by consent of all  
To one who had not spoken, Lionel.

Fair speech was his, and delicate of  
phrase.

And he beginning languidly—his loss  
Weigh'd on him yet—but warming as he  
went,

Glanced at the point of law, to pass it  
by,

Affirming that as long as either lived,  
By all the laws of love and gratefulness,

The service of the one so saved was due  
All to the saver—adding, with a smile,

The first for many weeks—a semi-smile  
As at a strong conclusion—"body and  
soul

And life and limbs, all his to work his  
will."

Then Julian made a secret sign to me  
To bring Camilla down before them all.

And crossing her own picture as she came,  
And looking as much lovelier as herself

Is lovelier than all others—on her head  
A diamond circlet, and from under this

A veil, that seemed no more than gilded  
air.

Flying by each fine ear, an Eastern gauze  
With seeds of gold—so, with that grace of  
hers,

Slow-moving as a wave against the wind,  
That flings a mist behind it in the sun—

And bearing high in arms the mighty  
babe,

The younger Julian, who himself was  
crown'd

With roses, none so rosy as himself—  
And over all her babe and her the jewels

Of many generations of his house  
Sparkled and flash'd, for he had decked

them out  
As for a solemn sacrifice of love—

So she came in:—I am long in telling it,  
I never yet beheld a thing so strange,

Sad, sweet, and strange together—floated  
in—

While all the guests in mute amazement  
rose—

And slowly pacing to the middle hall,  
Before the board, there paused and stood,

her breast  
Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her feet,

Not daring yet to glance at Lionel,  
But him she carried, him nor lights nor

feast  
Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men; who  
cared

Only to use his own, and staring wide  
And hungering for the gilt and jewel'd

world  
About him, look'd, as he is like to prove,  
When Julian goes, the lord of all he saw.

"My guests," said Julian: "you are  
honor'd now

Ev'n to the uttermost: in her behold  
Of all my treasures the most beautiful,

Of all things upon earth the dearest to  
me."

Then waving us a sign to seat ourselves,  
Led his dear lady to a chair of state.

And I, by Lionel sitting, saw his face  
Fire, and dead ashes and all fire again

Thrice in a second, felt him tremble too,  
And heard him muttering, "So like, so

like;  
She never had a sister. I knew none.

Some cousin of his and hers—O God, so  
like!"

And then he suddenly ask'd her if she  
were.

She shook, and cast her eyes down, and  
was dumb.

And then some other question'd if she  
came

From foreign lands, and still she did not  
speak.

Another, if the boy were hers: but she  
To all their queries answer'd not a word,

Which made the amazement more, till one  
of them

Said, shuddering, "Her spectre!" But  
his friend

Replied, in half a whisper, "Not at least  
The spectre that will speak if spoken to.

Terrible pity, if one so beautiful  
Prove, as I almost dread to find her

dumb!"

But Julian, sitting by her, answer'd all  
"She is but dumb, because in her you

see

That faithful servant whom we spoke  
about,  
Obedient to her second master now;  
Which will not last. I have here to-night  
a guest  
So bound to me by common love and loss—  
What! shall I bind him more? in his be-  
half,  
Shall I exceed the Persian, giving him  
That which of all things is the dearest to  
me,  
Not only showing? and he himself pro-  
nounced  
That my rich gift is wholly mine to give.

"Now all be dumb, and promise all of  
you  
Not to break in on what I say by word  
Or whisper, while I show you all my heart."  
And then began the story of his love  
As here to-day, but not so wordily—  
The passionate moment would not suffer  
that—  
Past thro' his visions to the burial; thence  
Down to this last strange hour in his own  
hall;  
And then rose up, and with him all his  
guests  
Once more as by enchantment; all but he,  
Lionel, who fain had risen, but fell again,  
And sat as if in chains—to whom he said:

"Take my free gift, my cousin, for your  
wife;  
And were it only for the giver's sake,

And tho' she seem so like the one you lost,  
Yet cast her not away so suddenly,  
Lest there be none left here to bring her  
back:  
I leave this land forever." Here he ceased.

Then taking his dear lady by one hand,  
And bearing on one arm the noble babe,  
He slowly brought them both to Lionel.  
And there the widower husband and dead  
wife  
Rush'd each at each with a cry, that rather  
seem'd

For some new death than for a life re-  
new'd;

Whereat the very babe began to wail;  
At once they turn'd, and caught and  
brought him in

To their charm'd circle, and, half killing  
him

With kisses, round him closed and claspt  
again.

But Lionel, when at last he freed himself  
From wife and child, and lifted up a face  
All over glowing with the sun of life,  
And love, and boundless thanks—the sight  
of this

So frighted our good friend, that, turning  
to me

And saying, "It is over: let us go"—  
There were our horses ready at the doors—  
We bade them no farewell, but mounting  
these

He part forever from his native land;  
And I with him, my Julian, back to mine.

## TWO GREETINGS.

## I.

Out of the deep, my child, out of the  
deep,  
Where all that was to be in all that was  
Whirl'd for a million æons thro' the vast  
Waste dawn of multitudinous-eddying  
light—  
Out of the deep, my child, out of the  
deep,  
Thro' all this changing world of change-  
less law,  
And every phase of ever-heightening life,  
And nine long months of antenatal gloom,  
With this last moon, this crescent—her  
dark orb  
Touch'd with earth's light—thou comest,  
darling boy;  
Our own; a babe in lineament and limb  
Perfect, and prophet of the perfect  
man;

Whose face and form are hers and mine  
in one,  
Indissolubly married like our love;  
Live and be happy in thyself, and serve  
This mortal race thy kin so well that men  
May bless thee as we bless thee, O young  
life,  
Breaking with laughter from the dark,  
and may  
The fated channel where thy motion lives  
Be prosperously shaped, and sway thy  
course  
Along the years of haste and random  
youth  
Unshatter'd, then full-current thro' full  
man,  
And last in kindly curves, with gentlest  
fall,  
By quiet fields, a slowly-dying power,  
To that last deep where we and thou are  
still.

## II.

## 1.

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,  
From that great deep before our world  
begins

Whereon the Spirit of God moves as he  
will—

Out of the deep, my child, out of the  
deep,  
From that true world within the world  
we see,

Whereof our world is but the bounding  
shore—

Out of the deep, Spirit, out of the deep,  
With this ninth moon that sends the hid-  
den sun

Down yon dark sea, thou comest, darling  
boy.

## 2.

For in the world which is not ours, They  
said,

"Let us make man," and that which  
should be man,

From that one light no man can look  
upon,

Drew to this shore lit by the suns and  
moons

And all the shadows. O dear Spirit, half-  
lost

In thine own shadow and this fleshly sign  
That thou art thou—who wailest being  
born

And banish'd into mystery, and the pain  
Of this divisible-indivisible world  
Among the numerable-innumerable  
Sun, sun, and sun, thro' finite-infinite  
space

In finite-infinite time—our mortal veil  
And shatter'd phantom of that infinite

One,  
Who made thee unconceivably thyself  
Out of His whole World-self and all in  
all—

Live thou, and of the grain and husk,  
the grape

And ivyberry, choose; and still depart  
From death to death thro' life and life,  
and find

Nearer and ever nearer Him who wrought  
Not Matter, nor the finite-infinite,  
But this main miracle, that thou art thou,  
With power on thine own act and on the  
world.

## THE HUMAN CRY.

## I.

Hallowed be Thy name—

Halleluiah!

Infinite Ideality!

Immeasurable Reality!

Infinite Personality!

Hallowed be Thy name—

Halleluiah!

## II.

We feel we are nothing—for all is Thou  
and in Thee;

We feel we are something—that also has  
come from Thee;

We are nothing, O Thou—but Thou wilt  
help us to be.

Hallowed be Thy name—Halleluiah!

## SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

ON THE CENOTAPH IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Not here! the white North has thy bones: and then,  
Heroic sailor-soul,

Art passing on thine happier voyage now  
Toward no earthly pole.

## TO DANTE.

(WRITTEN AT REQUEST OF THE FLORENTINES.)

King, that hast reign'd six hundred years,  
and grown

In power, and ever growest, since thine  
own

Fair Florence honoring thy nativity,

Thy Florence now the crown of Italy,

Bath sought the tribute of a verse from  
me,

I, wearing but the garland of a day,

Cast at thy feet one flower that fades  
away.

## THE FIRST QUARREL.

(IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.)

## I.

"Wait a little," you say, "you are sure  
it'll all come right,"  
But the boy was born i' trouble, an' looks  
so wan an' so white:  
Wat! an' once I ha' waited—I hadn't to  
wait for long.  
Now I wait, wait, wait for Harry.—No,  
no, you are doing me wrong!  
Harry and I were married: the boy can  
hold up his head,  
The boy was born in wedlock, but after  
my man was dead;  
I ha' worked for him fifteen years, an' I  
work an' I wait to the end.  
I am all alone in the world, an' you are  
my only friend.

## II.

Doctor, if you can wait, I'll tell you the  
tale o' my life.  
When Harry an' I were children, he call'd  
me his own little wife:  
I was happy when I was with him, an'  
sorry when he was away,  
An' when we play'd together, I loved him  
better than play;  
He workt me the daisy chain—he made  
me the cowslip ball,  
He fought the boys that were rude an' I  
loved him better than all.  
Passionate girl tho' I was, an' often at  
home in disgrace,  
I never could quarrel with Harry—I had  
but to look in his face.

## III.

There was a farmer in Dorset of Harry's  
kin, that had need  
Of a good stout lad at his farm; he sent,  
an' the father agreed;  
So Harry was bound to the Dorsetshire  
farm for years an' for years;  
I walked with him down to the quay, poor  
lad, an' we parted in tears.  
The boat was beginning to move, we  
heard them a-ringing the bell,  
"I'll never love any but you, God bless  
you, my own little Nell."

## IV.

I was a child, an' he was a child, an' he  
came to harm;  
There was a girl, a hussy, that workt with  
him up at the farm,  
One had deceived her an' left her alone  
with her sin an' her shame,  
And so she was wicked with Harry; the  
girl was the most to blame.

## V.

And years went over till I that was little  
had grown so tall,  
The men would say of the maids "Our  
Nelly's the flower of 'em all."  
I didn't take heed o' them, but I taught  
myself all I could  
To make a good wife for Harry, when  
Harry came home for good.

## VI.

Often I seem'd unhappy, and often as  
happy too,  
For I heard it abroad in the fields "I'll  
never love any but you;"  
"I'll never love any but you" the morn-  
ing song of 'he lark,  
"I'll never love any but you" the nightin-  
gale's hymn in the dark.

## VII.

And Harry come home at last, but he  
look'd at me sidelong and shy,  
Vext me a bit, till he told me that so  
many years had gone by,  
I had grown so handsome and tall—that I  
might ha' forgot him somehow—  
For he thought—there were other lads—  
he was fear'd to look at me now.

## VIII.

Hard was the frost in the field, we were  
married o' Christmas day,  
Married among the red berries, an' all  
as merry as May—  
Those were the pleasant times, my house  
an' my man were my pride,  
We seem'd like ships i' the Channel a-sail-  
ing with wind an' tide.

## IX.

But work was scant in the Isle, tho' he  
tried the villages round,  
So Harry went over the Solent to see if  
work could be found;  
An' he wrote "I ha' six weeks' work, lit-  
tle wife, so far as I know;  
I'll come for an hour to-morrow, an' kiss  
you before I go."

## X.

So I set to righting the house, for wasn't  
he coming that day?  
An' I hit on an old deal-box that was  
push'd in a corner away,  
It was full of old odds an' ends, an' a let-  
ter along wi' the rest,  
I had better ha' put my naked hand in a  
hornets' nest,

## XI.

"Sweetheart"—this was the letter—this was the letter I read—  
 "You promised to find me work near you, an' I wish I was dead—  
 Didn't you kiss me an' promise? you haven't done it, my lad,  
 An' I almost died o' your going away, an' I wish that I had."

## XII.

I too wish that I had—in the pleasant times that had past,  
 Before I quarrell'd with Harry—*my* quarrel—the first an' the last.

## XIII.

For Harry came in, an' I flung him the letter that drove me wild,  
 An' he told it me all at once, as simple as any child,  
 "What can it matter, my lass, what I did wi' my single life?  
 I ha' been as true to you as ever a man to his wife;  
 An' *she* wasn't one o' the worst." "Then," I said, "I'm none o' the best."  
 And he smiled at me, "Ain't you, my love? Come, come, little wife, let it rest!  
 The man isn't like the woman, no need to make such a stir."  
 But he anger'd me all the more, an' I said "You were keeping with her,  
 When I was a-lovin' you all along an' the same as before."  
 An' he didn't speak for a while, an' he anger'd me more and more.  
 Then he patted my hand in his gentle way, "Let bygones be!"  
 "Bygones! you kept yours hush'd," I said, "when you married me!  
 Bygones ma' be come-agains; an' *she*—in her shame an' her sin—  
 You'll have her to nurse my child, if I die o' my lying in!  
 You'll make her its second mother! I hate her—an' I hate you!"  
 Ah, Harry, my man, you had better ha' beaten me black an' blue

Than ha' spoken as kind as you did, when I were so crazy wi' spite,  
 "Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it'll all come right."

## XIV.

An' he took three turns in the rain, an' I watch'd him, an' when he came in I felt that my heart was hard, he was all wet thro' to the skin,  
 An' I never said "off wi' the wet," I never said "on wi' the dry,"  
 So I knew my heart was hard, when he came to bid me good-by.  
 "You said that you hated me, Ellen, but that isn't true, you know;  
 I am going to leave you a bit—you'll kiss me before I go?"

## XV.

"Going! you're going to her—kiss her—if you will," I said,—  
 I was near my time wi' the boy, I must ha' been light i' my head—  
 "I had sooner be cursed than kiss'd!"—I didn't know well what I meant,  
 But I turn'd my face from *him*, an' he turn'd *his* face an' he went.

## XVI.

An' then he sent me a letter, "I've gotten my work to do;  
 You wouldn't kiss me, my lass, an' I never loved any but you;  
 I am sorry for all the quarrel an' sorry for what she wrote,  
 I ha' six weeks' work in Jersey an' go to-night by the boat."

## XVII.

An' the wind began to rise, an' I thought of him out at sea,  
 An' I felt I had been to blame; he was always kind to me.  
 "Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it'll all come right"—  
 An' the boat went down that night—the boat went down that night.

## RIZPAH.

17—.

## II.

WAILING, wailing, wailing, the wind over land and sea—  
 And Willy's voice in the wind, "O mother, come out to me."  
 Why should he call me to-night, when he knows that I cannot go?  
 For the downs are as bright as day, and the full moon stares at the snow.

We should be seen, my dear; they would spy us out of the town.  
 The loud black nights for us, and the storm rushing over the down,  
 When I cannot see my own hand, but am led by the creak of the chain,  
 And grovel and grope for my son till I find myself drenched with the rain.

## III.

Any thing fallen again? nay—what was there left to fall?  
 I have taken them home, I have number'd the bones, I have hidden them all.  
 What am I saying? and what are *you*? do you come as a spy?  
 Falls? what falls? who knows? As the tree falls so must it lie.

## IV.

Who let her in? how long has she been? you—what have you heard?  
 Why did you sit so quiet? you never have spoken a word.  
 O—to pray with me—yes—a lady—none of their spies—  
 But the night has crept into my heart, and begun to darken my eyes.

## V.

Ah—you, that have lived so soft, what should *you* know of the night,  
 The blast and the burning shame and the bitter frost and the fright?  
 I have done it, while you were asleep—you were only made for the day.  
 I have gathered my baby together—and now you may go your way.

## VI.

Nay—for it's kind of you, Madam, to sit by an old dying wife.  
 But say nothing hard of my boy, I have only an hour of life.  
 I kiss'd my boy in the prison, before he went out to die.  
 "They dared me to do it," he said, and he never has told me a lie.  
 I whipt him for robbing an orchard once when he was but a child—  
 "The farmer dared me to do it," he said; he was always so wild—  
 And idle—and couldn't be idle—my Willy—he never could rest.  
 The King should have made him a soldier, he would have been one of his best.

## VII.

But he lived with a lot of wild mates, and they never would let him be good;  
 They swore that he dare not rob the mail, and he swore that he would;  
 And he took no life, but he took one purse, and when all was done  
 He flung it among his fellows—I'll none of it, said my son.

## VIII.

I came into court to the Judge and the lawyers. I told them my tale,  
 God's own truth—but they kill'd him, they kill'd him for robbing the mail.  
 They hang'd him in chains for a show—we had always born a good name—  
 To be hang'd for a thief—and then put away—isn't that enough *shame*?

Dust to dust—low down—let us hide! but they set him so high  
 That all the ships of the world could start at him, passing by.  
 God'll pardon the hell-black raven and horrible fowls of the air,  
 But not the black heart of the lawyer who kill'd him and hang'd him there.

## IX.

And the jailer forced me away. I had bid him my last good-by;  
 They had fastened the door of his cell.  
 "O mother!" I heard him cry.  
 I couldn't get back tho' I tried, he had something further to say,  
 And now I never shall know it. The jailer forced me away.

## X.

Then since I couldn't but hear that cry of my boy that was dead,  
 They seized me and shut me up: they fasten'd me down on my bed.  
 "Mother, O mother!"—he call'd in the dark to me year after year—  
 They beat me for that, they beat me—you know that I couldn't but hear;  
 And then at the last they found I had grown so stupid and still  
 They let me abroad again—but the creatures had worked their will.

## XI.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of my bone was left—  
 I stole them all from the lawyers—and you, will you call it a theft?  
 My baby, the bones that had suck'd me, the bones that had laughed and had cried—  
 Theirs? O no! they are mine—not theirs—they had moved in my side.

## XII.

Do you think I was scared by the bones? I kiss'd 'em, I buried 'em all—  
 I can't dig deep, I am old—in the night by the churchyard wall.  
 My Willy'll rise up whole when the trumpet of judgment 'ill sound,  
 But I charge you never to say that I laid him in holy ground.

## XIII.

They would scratch him up—they would hang him again on the cursed tree.  
 Sin? O yes—we are sinners, I know—let all that be,  
 And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's good will toward men—  
 "Full of compassion and mercy, the Lord"—let me hear it again;  
 "Full of compassion and mercy—long suffering." Yes, O yes!  
 For the lawyer is born but to murder—the Saviour lives but to bless.

He'll never put on the black cap except  
for the worst of the worst,  
And the first may be last—I have heard it  
in church—and the last may be first,  
Suffering—O long-suffering—yes, as the  
Lord must know,  
Year after year in the mist and the wind  
and the shower and the snow.

## XIV.

Heard have you? what? they have told  
you he never repented his sin.  
How do they know it? are *they* his moth-  
er? are *you* of his kin?  
Heard I have you ever heard, when the  
storm on the downs began?  
The wind that'll wail like a child, and the  
sea that'll moan like a man?

## XV.

Election, Election and Reprobation—it's  
all very well.  
But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall  
not find him in Hell.

For I cared so much for my boy that the  
Lord has look'd into my care,  
And He means me I'm sure to be happy  
with Willy, I know not where.

## XVI.

And if *he* be lost—but to save *my* soul,  
that is all your desire:  
Do you think that I care for *my* soul if my  
boy be gone to the fire?  
I have been with God in the dark—go, go,  
you may leave me alone—  
You never have borne a child—you are  
just as hard as a stone.

## XVII.

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think that  
you mean to be kind,  
But I cannot hear what you say for my  
Willy's voice in the wind—  
The snow and the sky so bright—he used  
but to call in the dark,  
And he calls to me now from the church  
and not from the gable—for hark!  
Nay—you can hear it yourself—it is com-  
ing—shaking the walls—  
Willy—the moon's in a cloud—Good  
night. I am going. He calls.

## THE NORTHERN COBBLER.

## I.

WAÄIT till our Sally cooms in, fur thou  
mun a' sights\* to tell.  
Eh, but I be maäin glad to seeä tha sa  
'arty an' well.  
"Cast awaäy on a disolut land wi' a varti-  
cal soon!" †  
Strange fur to goä fur to think what saäil-  
ors a' seean an' a' doon;  
"Summat to drink—sa' 'ot?" I 'a nowt  
but Adam's wine:  
What's the 'eät o' this little 'ill-side to the  
'eät o' the line?

## II.

"What's i' tha bottle a-stanning theer?"  
I'll tell tha. Gin.  
But if thou wants thy grog, tha mun goä  
fur it down to the inn.  
Naay—fur I be maäin-glad, but thaw tha  
was iver s' dry,  
Thou gits naw gin fro' the bottle theer,  
an' I'll tell tha why.

## III.

Meä an' thy sister was married, when wur  
it? back-end o' June,  
Ten year sin', and wa' greed as well as a  
fiddle i' tune:

\* The vowels *ä*, pronounced separately, though  
in the closest conjunction, best render the sound of  
the long *i* and *y* in this dialect. But since such  
words as *craäin*, *daäin*, *whaä*, *ä*, (I), etc., look awk-  
ward except in a page of express phonetics, I have  
thought it better to leave the simple *i* and *y*, and  
to trust that my readers will give them the broader  
pronunciation. † The *oo* short, as in "wood."

I could fettle and clump owd booöts and  
shoes wi' the best on 'em all,  
As fer as fro' Thursby thurn hup a'  
Harmsby and Hutterby Hall.  
We was busy as beeä s' the bloom an' a'  
'appy as 'art could think,  
An' then the babbie wur burn, and then I  
taäkes to the drink.

## IV.

An' I weänt gaäinsäy it, my lad, thaw I  
be hafe shaämed on it now,  
We could sing a good song at the Plow,  
we could sing a good song at the  
Plow;  
Thaw once of a frosty night I slither'd an'  
hurtet my huck,\*  
An' I coom'd neck-an-crop soometimes  
slaäpe down i' the squad an' the  
muck:  
An' once I fowt wi' the Taäilör—not hafe  
ov a man, my lad—  
Fur he scrawm'd an' scratted my faäce  
like a cat, an' it maäde 'er sa mad  
That Sally she turn'd a tongue-banger, †  
an' raäted ma. "Sottin' thy braäins  
Guzzliu' an' soäkin' an' smoäkin' an' haw-  
nin' ‡ about i' the laänes,  
Soä sow-droonk that tha doesn't touch  
thy 'at to the Squire,"  
An' I look'd cock-eyed at my noäse an' I  
seeä'd 'im a-gittin' o' fire;

\* Hip. † Scold. ‡ Lounging.

But sin' I wur hallus i' liquor an' hallus  
as droonk as a king,  
Foälks' coostom flitted awaäy like a kite  
wi' a brokken string.

## V.

An' Sally she wesh'd foälks' cloäths to  
keep the wolf fro' the door,  
Eh but the moor she riled me, she druv me  
to drink the moor,  
Fur I fun', when 'er back wur turn'd,  
wheer Sally's owd stockin' wur 'id,  
An' I grabb'd the munny she maäde, and  
I weär'd it o' liquor, I did.

## VI.

An' one night I cooms 'oäm like a bull  
gotten loose at a faäir,  
An' she wur a-waäitin' fo'mma, an' cryin'  
an' teärin' 'er 'aäir,  
An' I tummled athurt the traädle an'  
sweär'd as I'd breäk ivry stick  
O' furnitur 'ere i' the 'ouse, an' I gied our  
Sally a kick,  
An' I mash'd the taäbles an' chairs, an'  
she an' the babby beäl'd, \*  
Fur I knew'd naw moor what I did nor a  
mortal beäst o' the feäld.

## VII.

An' when I waäked i' the murnin' I seeäd  
that our Sally went laämed  
Cos' o' the kick as I gied 'er, an' I wur  
dreädful ashaämed;  
An' Sally wur sloomy† an' draggle-  
taäl'd in an owd turn gown,  
An' the babby's faäce wur'n't wesh'd an'  
the 'ole 'ouse hupside down.

## VIII.

An' then I minded our Sally sa pratty an'  
neät an' sweet,  
Straät as a pole an' cleän as a flower fro'  
'eäd to fecaät:  
An' then I minded the fust kiss I gied 'er  
by Thursby thurn;  
Theer wur a lark a-singin' 'is best of a  
Sunday at murn,  
Couldn't see 'im, we 'eärd 'im a-mountin'  
oop 'igher an' 'igher,  
An' then 'e turn'd to the sun, an' 'e shined  
like a sparkle o' fire.  
"Doesn't tha see 'im," she axes, "fur I  
can see 'im?" an' I  
Seeäd nobbut the smile o' the sun as  
danced in 'er pratty blue eye;  
An' I says "I mun gie tha a kiss," an' Sally  
says "Noä thou moänt,"  
But I gied 'er a kiss, an' then anoother,  
an' Sally says "doänt I!"

## IX.

An' when we coom'd into Meeatin', at fust  
she wur all in a tew,  
But, arter, we sing'd the 'ymn together  
like birds on a beugh;

\* Bellowed, cried out. † Sluggish, out of spirits.

An' Muggins \* prääch'd o' Hell-fire an'  
the loov o' God fur men,  
An' then upo' coomin' awaäy Sally gied  
me a kiss ov 'ersen.

## X.

Heer wur a fall fro' a kiss to a kick like  
Saätan as fell  
Down out o' heaven i' Hell-fire—thaw  
theer's naw drinkin' i' Hell;  
Meä fur to kick our Sally as kep' the wolf  
fro' the door,  
All along o' the drink, fur I loov'd 'er as  
well as afoor.

## XI.

Sa like a graät num-cumpus I blubber'd  
awaäy o' the bed—  
"Weant niver do it naw moor;" an' Sally  
looökt up an' she said,  
"I'll upowd it \* tha weant; thou'rt laike  
the rest o' the men,  
Thou'll goä sniffin' about the tap till tha  
does it agään.  
Theer's thy hennemy, man, an' I knaws,  
as knaws tha sa well  
That, if tha seeäs 'im an' smells 'im tha'll  
foller 'im slick into Hell."

## XII.

"Naäy," says I, "fur I weänt goä sniffin'  
about the tap."  
"Weänt tha?" she says, an' mysen I  
thowt i' mysen "mayhap."  
"Noa:" an' I started awaay like a shot,  
an' down to the Hinn,  
An' I browt that tha seeäs stannin' theer,  
yon big black bottle o' gin.

## XIII.

"That caps owt,"† says Sally, an' saw  
she begins to cry,  
But I puts it inter 'er 'ands an' I says to  
'er, "Sally," says I,  
"Stan' 'im theer i' the naäme o' the Lord  
an' the power ov 'is Graäce,  
Stan' 'im theer, fur I'll looök my hennemy  
straät i' the faäce,  
Stan' 'im theer i' the winder, an' let me  
looök at 'im then,  
'E seeäs naw moor nor watter. an' 'e's  
the Devil's oän sen."

## XIV.

An' I wur down i' the mouth, couldn't do  
naw work an' all,  
Nasty an' snaggy, an' shaäky an' poonen'd  
my 'and wi' the hawl,  
But she wur a power o' coomfut, an' sat-  
tled 'ersen o' my knee,  
An' coäxd an' coodled me oop till agään I  
feeld mysen free.

\* I'll uphold it. † That's beyond every thing

## XV.

An' Sally she tell'd it about, an' foalk  
stood a-gawmin' \* in,  
As thaw it wur summat bewitch'd instead  
of a quart o' gin;  
An' some on 'em said it wur watter—an' I  
wur chousin' the wife.  
Fur I couldn't 'owd 'ands off gin, wur it  
nobbnt to saave my life;  
An' blacksmith 'e strips me the thick ov  
'is airm, an' 'e shaws it to me,  
"Feäl thou this! thou can't graw this  
upo' watter!" says he.  
An' Doctor 'e calls o' Sunday an' just as  
candles was lit,  
"Thou moänt do it," he says, "tha mun  
breäk 'im off bit by bit."  
"Thou'rt but a Methody-man," says Par-  
son, and laäys down 'is 'at,  
An' 'e points to the bottle o' gin, "but I  
respects tha fur that;"  
An' Squire, his oän very sen, walks down  
fro' the 'All to see,  
An' 'e spansks 'is 'and into mine, "fur I  
respects tha," says 'e;  
An' coosom ageän draw'd in like a wind  
fro' far an' wide,  
An' browt me the booöts to be cobbled  
fro' hafe the countryside.

## XVI.

An' theer'e stans an' theer 'e shall stan to  
my dying daäy;  
I 'a gotten to loov 'im ageän in anoother  
kind of a waäy,  
Proud on 'im, like, my lad, an' I keeäps  
'im cleän an' bright,  
Loovs 'im, an' roobs 'im, an' doosts 'im,  
an' puts 'im back i' the light.

\* Staring vacantly.

## XVII.

Wouldn't a pint a' sarved as well as a  
quart? Naw doubt!  
But I liked a bigger feller to fight wi' an'  
fowt it out.  
Fine an' meller 'e mun be by this, if I  
cared to taste,  
But I moänt, my lad, and I weänt, fur I'd  
feäl mysen cleän disgräced.

## XVIII.

An' once I said to the Missis, "My lass,  
when I cooms to die,  
Smash the bottle to smithers, the Divil's  
'in 'im," said I.  
But arter I chaänged my mind, an' if  
Sally be left aloän,  
I'll hev 'im a-burried wi'mma an' taäke  
'im afor the Throän.

## XIX.

Coom thou 'eer—yon laädy a-steppin'  
along the streeät,  
Doesn't tha know 'er—sa pratty, an' feät,  
an' neät, an' sweet?  
Look at the cloäths on 'er back, thebbe  
ammot spick-span new,  
An' Tommy's faäce is as fresh as a codlin  
'at's wesh'd i' the dew.

## XX.

'Ere's our Sally an' Tommy, an' we be  
a-goin' to dine,  
Baäcon an' taätes, an' a beslings-puddin' \*  
an' Adam's wine;  
But if tha wants ony grog tha mun goä  
fur it down to the Hinn,  
Fur I weänt shed a drop on 'is blood, noa,  
not fur Sally's oän kin.

\* A pudding made with the first milk of the cow  
after calving.

## THE SISTERS.

THEY have left the doors ajar; and by  
their clash,  
And prelude on the keys, I know the song,  
Their favorite—which I call "The Tables  
Turned."  
Evelyn begins it "O diviner Air."

## EVELYN.

O diviner Air,  
Thro' the heat, the drowth, the dust,  
the glare,  
Far from out the west in shadowing  
showers,  
Over all the meadow baked and bare,  
Making fresh and fair  
All the bowers and the flowers,  
Fainting flowers, faded bowers,  
Over all this weary world of ours,  
Breatho, diviner Air!

A sweet voice that—you scarce could bet  
ter that.  
Now follows Edith echoing Evelyn.

## EDITH.

O diviner Light,  
Thro' the cloud that roofs our neon  
with night,  
Thro' the blotting mist, the blinding  
showers,  
Far from out a sky forever bright,  
Over all the woodland's flooded bow-  
ers,  
Over all the meadow's drowning flow-  
ers,  
Over all this ruin'd world of ours,  
Break, diviner Light!

Marvellously like, their voices—and them selves!

Tho' one is somewhat deeper than the other,

As one is somewhat graver than the other—

Edith than Evelyn. Your good Uncle, whom

You count the father of your fortune, longs For this alliance: let me ask you then,

Which voice most takes you? for I do not doubt

Being a watchful parent, you are taken With one or other: tho' sometimes I fear

You may be flickering, fluttering in a doubt Between the two—which must not be—

which might

Be death to one: they both are beautiful:

Evelyn is gayer, wittier, prettier, says

The common voice, if one may trust it: she?

No! but the paler and the graver, Edith.

Woo her and gain her then: no wavering, boy!

The graver is perhaps the one for you

Who jest and laugh so easily and so well.

For love will go by contrast, as by likes.

No sisters ever prized each other more. Not so: their mother and her sister loved More passionately still.

But that my best

And oldest friend, your Uncle, wishes it,

And that I know you worthy every way

To be my son, I might, perchance, be loath

To part them, or part from them: and yet one

Should marry, or all the broad lands in your view

From this bay window—which our house has held

Three hundred years—will pass collaterally.

My father with a child on either knee, A hand upon the head of either child,

Smoothing their locks, as golden as his own

Were silver, "get them wedded" would he say.

And once my prattling Edith ask'd him "why?"

Ay, why? said he, "for why should I go lame?"

Then told them of his wars, and of his wound.

For see—this wine—the grape from whence it flow'd

Was blackening on the slopes of Portugal, When that brave soldier, down the terrible ridge

Plunged in the last fierce charge at Waterloo,

And caught the laming bullet. He left me this,

Which yet retains a memory of its youth!

As I of mine, and my first passion. Come.

Here's to your happy union with my child!

Yet must you change your name: no fault of mine!

You say that you can do it as willingly As birds make ready for their bridal-time

By change of feather: for all that, my boy,

Some birds are sick and sullen when they molt.

An old and worthy name! but mine that stir'd

Among our civil wars and earlier too Among the Roses, the more venerable.

I care not for a name—no fault of mine.

Once more—a happier marriage than my own!

You see yon Lombard poplar on the plain.

The highway running by it leaves a breadth

Of sward to left and right, where, long ago,

One bright May morning in a world of song,

I lay at leisure, watching overhead

The aerial poplar wave, an amber spire.

I dozed; I woke. An open laudaulet Whirl'd by, which, after it had past me,

show'd

Turning my way, the loveliest face on earth.

The face of one there sitting opposite,

On whom I brought a strange unhappiness,

That time I did not see.

Love at first sight

May seem—with goodly rhyme and reason for it—

Possible—at first glimpse, and for a face Gone in a moment—strange. Yet once,

when first

I came on Lake Llanberis in the dark, A moonless night with storm—one lightning-fork

Flash'd out the lake; and tho' I loiter'd there

The full day after, yet in retrospect

That less than momentary thunder-sketch

Of lake and mountain conquers all the day.

The Sun himself has limn'd the face for me.

Not quite so quickly, no, nor half as well, For look you here—the shadows are too deep.

And like the critic's blurring comment make

The veriest beauties of the work appear

The darkest faults: the sweet eyes frown:

the lips

Seem but a gash. My sole memorial

Of Edith—no the other,—both indeed.

So that bright face was flash'd thro'

sense and soul

And by the poplar vanish'd—to be found

Long after, as it seem'd, beneath the tall

Tree-bowers, and those long-sweeping  
 beechen boughs  
 Of our New Forest. I was there alone:  
 The phantom of the whirling landaulet  
 Forever past me by: when one quick peal  
 Of laughter drew me thro' the glimmering  
 glades  
 Down to the snowlike sparkle of a cloth  
 On fern and foxglove. Lo, the face again,  
 My Rosalind in this Arden—Edith—all  
 One bloom of youth, health, beauty, hap-  
 piness,  
 And moved to merriment at a passing jest.

There one of those about her knowing  
 me  
 Call'd me to join them; so with these I  
 spent  
 What seem'd my crowning hour, my day  
 of days.  
 I woo'd her then, nor unsuccessfully,  
 The worse for her, for me! was I con-  
 tent?  
 Ay—no, not quite; for now and then I  
 thought  
 Laziness, vague love-longings, the bright  
 May,  
 Had made a heated maze to magnify  
 The charm of Edith—that a man's ideal  
 Is high in Heaven, and lodged with Pla-  
 to's God,  
 Not findable here—content, and not con-  
 tent,  
 In some such fashion as a man may be  
 That having had the portrait of his friend  
 Drawn by an artist, looks at it, and says,  
 "Good! very like! not altogether he."

As yet I had not bound myself by  
 words,  
 Only, believing I loved Edith, made  
 Edith loved me. Then came the day  
 when I,  
 Flattering myself that all my doubts were  
 fools  
 Born of the fool this Age that doubts of  
 all—  
 Not I that day of Edith's love or mine—  
 Had braced my purpose to declare myself:  
 I stood upon the stars of Paradise.  
 The golden gates would open at a word.  
 I spoke it—told her of my passion, seen  
 And lost and found again, had got so far,  
 Had caught her hand, her eyelids fell—I  
 heard  
 Wheels, and a noise of welcome at the  
 doors—  
 On a sudden after two Italian years  
 Had set the blossom of her health again,  
 The younger sister, Evelyn, enter'd—  
 there,  
 There was the face, and altogether she.  
 The mother fell upon the daughter's neck,  
 The sisters closed in one another's arms,  
 Their people throng'd about them from  
 the hall,  
 And in the thick of question and reply  
 I fled the house, driven by one angel face,  
 And all the Furies.

I was bound to her;  
 I could not free myself in honor—bound  
 Not by the sounded letter of the word,  
 But counter-pressures of the yielded hand  
 That timorously and faintly echoed mine,  
 Quick blushes, the sweet dwelling of her  
 eyes  
 Upon me when she thought I did not see—  
 Were these not bonds? nay, nay, but  
 could I wed her  
 Loving the other? do her that great  
 wrong?  
 Had I not dream'd I loved her yester-  
 morn?  
 Had I not known where Love, at first a  
 fear,  
 Grew after marriage to full height and  
 form?  
 Yet after marriage, that mock-sister  
 there—  
 Brother-in-law—the fiery nearness of it—  
 Unlawful and disloyal brotherhood—  
 What end but darkness could ensue from  
 this  
 For all the three? So Love and Honor  
 jarr'd  
 Tho' Love and Honor join'd to raise the  
 full  
 High-tide of doubt that sway'd me up and  
 down  
 Advancing nor retreating.

Edith wrote:  
 "My mother bids me ask"—(I did not tell  
 you—  
 A widow with less guile than many a  
 child.  
 God help the wrinkled children that are  
 Christ's  
 As well as the plump cheek—she wrought  
 us harm,  
 Poor soul, not knowing) "are you ill? (she  
 ran  
 The letter) "you have not been here of  
 late.  
 You will not find me here. At last I go  
 On that long-promised visit to the North.  
 I told your wayside story to my mother  
 And Evelyn. She remembers you. Fare-  
 well.  
 Pray come and see my mother. Almost  
 blind  
 With ever-growing cataract, yet she thinks  
 She sees you when she hears. Again  
 farewell."

Cold words from one I had hoped to warm  
 so far  
 That I could stamp my image on her  
 heart!  
 "Pray come and see my mother, and fare-  
 well."  
 Cold, but as welcome as free airs of  
 heaven  
 After a dungeon's closeness. Selfish,  
 strange!  
 What dwarfs are men! my strangled  
 vanity  
 Utter'd a stifled cry—to have vex't myself  
 And all in vain for her—cold heart or  
 none—

No bride for me. Yet so my path was clear  
To win the sister.

Whom I woo'd and won.  
For Evelyn knew not of my former suit,  
Because the simple mother work'd upon  
By Edith pray'd me not to whisper of it.  
And Edith would be bridesmaid on the day.

But on that day, not being all at ease,  
I from the altar glancing back upon her,  
Before the first 'I will' was utter'd, saw  
The bridesmaid pale, statuelike, passion-  
less—

"No harm, no harm" I turn'd again, and placed  
My ring upon the finger of my bride.

So, when we parted, Edith spoke no word,  
She wept no tear, but round my Evelyn clung  
In utter silence for so long, I thought  
"What will she never set her sister free?"

We left her, happy each in each, and then,  
As tho' the happiness of each in each  
Were not enough, must fain have torrents,  
lakes,  
Hills, the great things of Nature and the fair,  
To lift us as it were from commonplace,  
And help us to our joy. Better have sent  
Our Edith thro' the glories of the earth,  
To change with her horizon, if true Love  
Were not his own imperial all-in-all.

Far off we went. My God, I would not live  
Save that I think this gross hard-seeming world  
Is our misshaping vision of the Powers  
Behind the world, that make our griefs  
our gains.

For on the dark night of our marriage-day  
The great Tragedian, that had quenched  
herself  
In that assumption of the bridesmaid—she  
That loved me—our true Edith—her brain  
broke  
With over-acting, till she rose and fled  
Beneath a pitiless rush of Autumn rain  
To the deaf church—to be let in—to pray  
Before that altar—so I think; and there  
They found her beating the hard Protestant doors.  
She died and she was buried ere we knew.

I learnt it first. I had to speak. At once  
The bright quick smile of Evelyn, that had sunn'd  
The morning of our marriage, past away:  
And on our home return the daily want  
Of Edith in the house, the garden, still  
Haunted us like her ghost; and by and by,  
Either from that necessity for talk

Which lives with blindness, or plain innocence  
Of nature, or desire that her lost child  
Should earn from both the praise of hero-  
ism,  
The mother broke her promise to the dead,  
And told the living daughter with what love  
Edith had welcomed my short wooing of her,  
And all her sweet self-sacrifice and death.

Henceforth that mystic bond betwixt the twins—  
Did I not tell you they were twins?—pre-  
vail'd  
So far that no caress could win my wife  
Back to that passionate answer of full heart  
I had from her at first. Not that her love,  
Tho' scarce as great as Edith's power of love,  
Had lessen'd, but the mother's garrulous  
wall  
Forever woke the unhappy Past again,  
Till that dead bridesmaid, meant to be my  
bride,  
Put forth cold hands between us, and I fear'd  
The very fountains of her life were chill'd;  
So took her thence, and brought her here,  
and here  
She bore a child, whom reverently we call'd  
Edith; and in the second year was born  
A second—this I named from her own self,  
Evelyn; then two weeks—no more—she  
joined,  
In and beyond the grave, that one she loved.

Now in this quiet of declining life,  
Thro' dreams by night and trances of the day,  
The sisters glide about me hand in hand,  
Both beautiful alike, nor can I tell  
One from the other, no, nor care to tell  
One from the other, only know they come,  
They smile upon me, till, remembering all  
The love they both have borne me, and the love  
I bore them both—divided as I am  
From either by the stillness of the grave—  
I know not which of these I love the best.

But *you* love Edith; and her own true eyes  
Are traitors to her; our quick Evelyn—  
The merrier, prettier, wittier, as they talk,  
And not without good reason, my good son—  
Is yet untouched: and I that hold them both  
Dearest of all things—well, I am not sure—  
But if there lie a preference either way,  
And in the rich vocabulary of Love  
'Most dearest' be a true superlative—  
I think I likewise love your Edith most.

## THE VILLAGE WIFE; OR, THE ENTAIL.\*

## I.

'OUSE-KEEPER sent tha my lass, fur new  
Squire coom'd last night.  
Butter an' hegg's—yis—yis. I'll goâ wi'  
tha back: all right;  
Butter I warrants be prime, an' I war-  
rants the hegg's be as well,  
Hafe a pint o' milk runs out when ya  
breaks the shell.

## II.

Sit thysen down fur a bit: hev a glass o'  
cowslip wine!  
I liked the owd Squire an' 'is gells as thaw  
they was gells o' mine,  
Fur then we was alles one, the Squire an'  
'is darters an' me,  
Hall but Miss Annie, the heldest, I niver  
no: took to she:  
But Nelly, the last of the clatch, † I  
liked 'er the fust on 'em all,  
Fur hoffens we talkt o' my darter es dead  
o' the fever at fall:  
An' thowt 'twur the will o' the Lord, but  
Miss Annie she said it wur draains,  
Fur she hedn't naw coomfut in 'er, an'  
arn'd raw thanks fur 'er paains.  
Eh! thebbe all wi' the Lord my childer,  
I han't gotten none!  
Sa new Squire's coomed wi' 'is taill in 'is  
'and, 'an owd Squire's gone.

## III.

Fur 'staate be i' taill, my lass: tha dosn'  
knew what that be?  
But I knows the law, I does, for the law-  
yer ha tow'd it me.  
'When theer's naw 'eâd to a 'Ouse by the  
fault o' that ere maile—  
The gells they counts fur nowt, and the  
next un he taakes the taill."

## IV.

What be the next un like? can tha tell  
ony harm on 'im lass?—  
Naay sit down—naw 'urry—sa cowl!—  
hev another glass!  
Straänge an' cowl fur the time! we may  
happen a fall 'o snaw—  
Not es I cares fur to bear ony harm, but  
I likes to know.  
An' I 'oâps es 'e beânt booôklarn'd: but  
'e dosn' not coom fro' the shere;  
'e'd anew o' that wi' the Squire, an' we  
haates booôklarnin' ere.

## V.

Fur Squire wur a Varsity scholard, an'  
niver lookt arter the land—  
Whoâts and turnmuts or taates—'e 'ed  
hallus a booôk i' 'is 'and,

\* See note to "Northern Cobbler."

† A brood of chickens.

Hallus aloân wi' 'is booôks, thaw nigh  
upo' seventy year.  
An' booôks, what's booôks? thou knows  
thebbe neyther 'ere nor theer.

## VI.

An' the gells, they hedn't naw taills, an'  
the lawyer he tow'd it me  
That 'is taill were soâ tied up es he  
'couldn't cut down a tree!  
"Drat the trees," says I, to be sewer I  
haâtes 'em, my lass,  
Fur we puts the muck o' the land, an'  
they sucks the muck fro' the grass.

## VII.

An' Squire wur hallus a-smilin', an' gied  
to the tramps goin' by—  
An' all o' the wust i' the parish—wi'  
hoffens a drop in 'is eye.  
An' ivry darter o' Squire's hed her awn  
riden-erse to 'ersen,  
An' they rampaged about wi' their grooms,  
an' was 'untin' arter the men,  
An' hallus a-dallackt \* an' hizen'd out,  
an' a-buyin' new cloâthes,  
While 'e sit like a graât glimmer-gowk †  
wi' 'is glasses athurt 'is noase,  
An' 'is noase sa grufted wi' snuff as it  
couldn't be scroob'd awaay,  
Fur atween 'is readin' an' writin' 'e snift  
up a box in a daây,  
An' 'e niver runn'd arter the fox, nor  
arter the birds wi' 'is gun,  
An' 'e niver not shot one 'are, but 'e  
leâved it to Charlie 'is son,  
An' 'e niver not fish'd 'is awn ponds, but  
Charlie 'e cotch'd the pike,  
Fur 'e warn't not burn to the land, an' 'e  
didn't take kind to it like;  
But I ears es 'e'd gie fur a howry ‡ owd  
book thutty pound an' moor,  
An' 'e'd wrote an owd book, his awn sen,  
sa I know'd es 'e'd coom to be poor;  
An' 'e gied—I be fear'd fur to tell tha 'ow  
much—fur an owd scratted stoân,  
An' 'e digg'd up a loomp i' the land an' 'e  
got a brown pot an' a boân,  
An' 'e bowt owd money, es woudn't goâ,  
wi' good gowd o' the Queen,  
An' 'e bowt little statutes all-naâkt an'  
which was a shaame to be seen;  
But 'e niver looôkt ower a bill, nor 'e  
niver not seed to owt,  
An' 'e niver knawd nowt but booôks, an'  
booôks, as thou knows, beânt nowt.

## VIII.

But owd Squire's laây es long es she  
lived she kep' 'em all clear,  
Thaw es long es she lived I niver hed  
none o' 'er darters 'ere;

\* Overdressed in gay colors. † Owl. ‡ Filthy.

But arter she died we was all es one, the  
childer an' me,  
An' sarvints runn'd in an' out, an' offens  
we hed 'em to tea.  
Lawk! 'ow I laugh'd when the lasses 'ud  
talk o' their Misses's waäys,  
An' the Missis talk'd o' the lasses.—I'll  
tell tha some o' these daäys.  
Hoänly Miss Annie were saw stuck oop,  
like 'er mother afoor—  
'Er 'an 'er blessed darter—they niver  
derken'd my door.

IX.

An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled till 'e'd  
gotten a fright at last,  
An' 'e calls fur 'is son, fur the 'turney's  
letters they foller'd sa fast;  
But Squire wur afear'd o' 'is son, an' 'e  
says to 'im, meek as a mouse,  
"Lad, thou mun cut off thy taäil, or the  
gells 'ull goä to the 'Ouse,  
Fur I finds es I be that i' debt, es I 'oäps  
es thou'll 'elp me a bit,  
An' if thou'll 'gree to cut off thy taäil I  
may saäve mysen yit."

X.

But Charlie 'e sets back 'is ears, an' 'e  
sweärs, an' 'e says to 'im "Noa."  
"I've gotten the 'staäte by the taäil an' be  
dang'd if I iver let goä!  
Coom! coom! feyther," 'e says, "why  
shouldn't thy booöks be sowd?  
I hears es soon o' thy booöks mebbe  
worth ther weight i' gowd."

XI.

Heäps an' heäps o' booöks, I ha' see'd 'em,  
belong'd to the Squire,  
But the lasses 'ed teärd out leaves i' the  
middle to kindle the fire;  
Sa moäst on 'is owd big booöks fetch'd  
nigh to nowt at the saäle,  
And Squire were at Charlie ageän to git  
'im to cut off 'is taäil.

XII.

Ya wouldn't find Charlie's likes—'e were  
that outdacious at 'oäm.  
Not thaw ya went fur to raäke out Hell  
wi' a small-toth coömb—  
Droonk wi' the Quöloty's wine, an' droonk  
wi' the farmer's ääle,  
Mad wi' the lasses an' all—an' 'e wouldn't  
cut off 'is taäil.

XIII.

Thou's coom'd oop by the beck; and a  
thurn be a-grawin' theer,  
I niver ha seed it sa white wi' the Maäy es  
I see'd it to-year—  
Theerabouts Charlie joompt—and it gied  
me a scare tother night,  
Fur I thowt it wur Charlie's ghöäst i' the  
derk, fur it loökt sa white.

"Billy," says 'e, "hev a joomp!"—thaw  
the banks o' the beck be sa high,  
Fur he ca'd 'is 'erse Billy-rough-un, thaw  
niver a hair wur awry;  
But Billy fell bakkuds o' Charlie, an'  
Charlie 'e brok 'is neck.  
So theer wur a hend o' the taäil, fur 'e  
lost 'is taäil i' the beck.

XIV.

Sa 'is taäil wur lost an' 'is booöks wur  
gone an' 'is boy wur deäp,  
An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled, but 'e  
niver not lift oop 'is eäð:  
Hallus a soft un Squire! an' 'e smiled,  
fur 'e hedn't naw friend,  
Sa feyther an' son was buried together,  
an' this wur the hend.

XV.

An' Parson as hesn't the call, nor the  
mooney, but hes the pride,  
'E reäds of a sewer an' sartin 'oäp o' the  
tother side;  
But I beänt that sewer as the Lord,  
howsiver they praäy'd an' praäy'd,  
Lets them inter 'eaven eäys es leäves  
their debts to be paäid.  
Siver the mou'ds rattled down upo' poor  
owd Squire i' the wood,  
An' I cried along wi' the gells, fur they  
weänt niver coom to naw good.

XVI.

Fur Molly the youngest she walkt awaäy  
wi' a hoffer lad,  
An' nawbody 'eärd on 'er sin, sa o' coarse  
she be gone to the bad!  
An' Lucy wur laäme o' one leg, sweet 'arts  
she niver 'ed none—  
Strange an' unheppen \* Miss Lucy! we  
naämed her 'Dot an' gaw one!  
An' Hetty wur weak i' the hattics, wi'out  
ony harm i' the leggs,  
An' the fever 'ed baäked Jinny's 'eäð as  
bald as one o' them heggs,  
An' Nelly wur up fro' the craädle as big i'  
the mouth as a cow,  
An' saw she mun hammergrate, † lass, or  
she weänt git a maäte onyhow!  
An' es fur Miss Annie es caä'd me afoor  
my awn föilks to my faäce  
"A hignorant village wife as 'ud hev to be  
larn'd her awn plaäce."  
Hes fur Miss Hannie the heldest hes now  
be a-grawin' sa howd,  
I knaws that mooch o' sheä, es it beänt  
not fit to be tow'd!

XVII.

Sa I didn't not taäke it kindly ov owd  
Miss Annie to saäy  
Es I should be takin' ageän 'em, es soon  
es they went waäy.  
Fur, lawk! 'ow I oried when they went,  
an' our Nelly she gied me 'er 'and,  
Fur I'd ha done owt fur the Squire an' 'is  
gells es belong'd to the land;

\* Ungainly, awkward. † Emigrate

Booöks, es I said afoor, thebbe neyther  
'ere nor theer!  
But I sarved 'em wi' butter an' heggs fur  
huppuds o' twenty year.

## XVIII.

An' they hallus païd what I hax'd, sa I  
hallus deal'd wi' the Hall,  
An' they knaw'd what butter wur, an'  
they knaw'd what a hegg wur an'  
all:  
Hugger-mugger they lived, but they  
wasn't that eäsy to pleäse,  
Till I gied 'em Hinjian curn, an' they  
laäid big heggs es tha seas;

An' I niver puts saäme \* i' my butter,  
they does it at Willis's farm,  
Taäste another drop o' the wine—tweänt  
do tha naw harm.

## XIX.

Sa new Squire's 'coom'd wi' 'is taäil in 'is  
'and, an' owd Squire's gone;  
I heard 'im a roomlin' by, but arter my  
nightcap wur on:  
Sa I han't clapt eyes on 'im yit, fur he  
coom'd last night sa laäte—  
Pluksh! ! ! † the hens i' the peäs! why  
didn't tha hesp the gaäte?

\* Lard. † A cry accompanied by a clapping of  
hands to scare trespassing fowls.

## IN THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.

## EMMIE.

## I.

OUR doctor had call'd in another, I never  
had seen him before,  
But he sent a chill to my heart when I  
saw him come in at the door,  
Fresh from the surgery-schools of France  
and of other lands—  
Harsh red hair, big voice, big chest, big  
merciless hands!  
Wonderful cures he had done, O yes, but  
they said too of him  
He was happ'er using the knife than in  
trying to save the limb,  
And that I can well believe, for he look'd  
so coarse and so red,  
I could think he was one of those who  
would break their jests on the dead,  
And mangle the living dog that had loved  
him and fawn'd at his knee—  
Drench'd with the hellish orali—that  
ever such things should be!

## II.

Here was a boy—I am sure that some of  
our children would die  
But for the voice of Love, and the smile,  
and the comforting eye—  
Here was a boy in the ward, every bone  
seem'd out of its place—  
Caught in a mill and crush'd—it was all  
but a hopeless case:  
And he handled him gently enough; but  
his voice and his face were not kind,  
And it was but a hopeless case, he had  
seen it and made up his mind,  
And he said to me roughly, "The lad will  
need little more of your care."  
"All the more need," I told him, "to  
seek the Lord Jesus in prayer;  
They are all his children here, and I pray  
for them all as my own:"  
But he turn'd to me, "Ay, good woman,  
can prayer set a broken bone?"

Then he mutter'd half to himself, but I  
know that I heard him say  
"All very well—but the good Lord Jesus  
has had his day."

## III.

Had? has it come? It has only dawn'd.  
It will come by and by.  
O how could I serve in the wards if the  
hope of the world were a lie?  
How could I bear with the sights and the  
loathsome smells of disease,  
But that He said "Ye do it to me, when  
ye do it to these?"

## IV.

So he went. And we past to this ward  
where the younger children are laid:  
Here is the cot of our orphan, our darling,  
our meek little maid;  
Empty you see just now! We have lost  
her who loved her so much—  
Patient of pain tho' as quick as a sensitive  
plant to the touch;  
Hers was the prettiest prattle, it often  
moved me to tears,  
Hers was the gratefulest heart I have  
found in a child of her years—  
Nay you remember our Emmie; you used  
to send her the flowers;  
How she would smile at 'em, play with  
'em, talk to 'em hours after hours!  
They that can wander at will where the  
works of the Lord are reveal'd  
Little guess what joy can be got from a  
cowslip out of the field;  
Flowers to these "spirits in prison" are  
all th y can know of the spring,  
They freshen and sweeten the wards like  
the waft of an angel's wing.  
And she lay with a flower in one hand and  
her thin hands crost on her breast—  
Wan, but as pretty as heart can desire  
and we thought her at rest,

Quietly sleeping—so quiet, our doctor said  
 "Poor little dear,  
 Nurse, I must do it to-morrow; she'll  
 never live thro' it, I fear."

## V.

I walk'd with our kindly old Doctor as far  
 as the head of the stair,  
 Then I returned to the ward; the child  
 didn't see I was there.

## VI.

Never since I was nurse, had I been so  
 grieved and so vex't!  
 Emmie had heard him. "Softly she call'd  
 from her cot to the next,  
 "He says I shall never live thro' it, O  
 Annie, what shall I do?"  
 Annie consider'd. "If I," said the wise  
 little Annie, "was you,  
 I should cry to the dear Lord Jesus to  
 help me, for, Emmie, you see,  
 It's all in the picture there: 'Little chil-  
 dren should come to me.'"  
 (Meaning the print that you gave us, I  
 find that it always can please  
 Our children, the dear Lord Jesus with  
 children about his knees.)  
 "Yes, and I will," said Emmie, "but then  
 if I call to the Lord,  
 How should he know that it's me? such a  
 lot of beds in the ward!"  
 That was a puzzle for Annie. Again she  
 consider'd and said:  
 "Emmie, you put out your arms, and you  
 leave 'em outside on the bed—

The Lord has so *much* to see to! but,  
 Emmie, you tell it him plain,  
 It's the little girl with her arms lying out  
 on the counterpane."

## VII.

I had sat three nights by the child—I  
 could not watch her for four—  
 My brain had begun to reel—I felt I could  
 do it no more.  
 That was my sleeping-night, but I thought  
 that it never would pass.  
 There was a thunder-clap once, and a  
 clatter of hail on the glass,  
 And there was a phantom cry that I heard  
 as I tost about,  
 The motherless bleat of a lamb in the  
 storm and the darkness without;  
 My sleep was broken besides with dreams  
 of the dreadful knife  
 And fears of our delicate Emmie who  
 scarce would escape with her life;  
 Then in the gray of the morning it seem'd  
 she stood by me and smiled,  
 And the doctor came at his hour, and we  
 went to see to the child.

## VIII.

He had brought his ghastly tools: we be-  
 lieved her asleep again—  
 Her dear, long, lean, little arms lying out  
 on the counterpane;  
 Say that His day is done! Ay why should  
 we care what they say?  
 The Lord of the children had heard her,  
 and Emmie had passed away.

## SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE, LORD COBHAM.

## (IN WALES.)

My friend should meet me somewhere  
 hereabout  
 To take me to that hiding in the hills.

I have broke their cage, no gilded one,  
 I throw—

I read no more the prisoner's mute wail  
 Scribbled or carved upon the pitiless  
 stone;

I find hard rocks, hard life, hard cheer,  
 or none,

For I am emptier than a friar's brains;  
 But God is with me in this wilderness,  
 These wet black passes and foam-churn-  
 ing chasms,—

And God's free air, and hope of better  
 things.

I would I knew their speech; not now  
 to glean

Not now—I hope to do it—some scatter'd  
 ears,

Some ears for Christ in this wild field of  
 Wales—

But, bread, merely for bread. This tongue  
 that wagg'd

They said with such heretical arrogance  
 Against the proud archbishop Arundel—  
 So much God's cause was fluent in it—is  
 here

But as a Latin Bible to the crowd;  
 "Bara!"—what use? The Shepherd,  
 when I speak,

Veiling a sullen eyelid with his hard  
 "Dim Saesneg" passes, wroth at things  
 of old—

No fault of mine. Had he God's word in  
 Welsh

He might be kindlier: happily come the  
 day!

Not least art thou, thou little Bethle-  
 hem

In Judah, for in thee the Lord was born;  
 Nor thou in Britain, little Lutterworth,  
 Least, for in thee the word was born  
 again.

Heaven-sweet Evangel, ever-living word,  
 Who whilom spakest to the South in  
 Greek  
 About the soft Mediterranean shores,  
 And then in Latin to the Latin crowd,  
 As good need was—thou hast come to talk  
 our isle.  
 Hereafter thou, fulfilling Pentecost,  
 Must learn to use the tongues of all the  
 world.  
 Yet art thou thine own witness that thou  
 bringest  
 Not peace, a sword, a fire.

What did he say,  
 My frightened Wiclif-preacher whom I crost  
 In flying hither? that one night a crowd  
 Through'd the waste field about the city  
 gates:  
 The king was on them suddenly with a  
 host.  
 Why there? they came to hear their  
 preacher. Then  
 Come cried on Cobham, on the good Lord  
 Cobham;  
 Ay, for they love me! but the king—nor  
 voice  
 Nor finger raised against him—took and  
 hang'd,  
 Took, hang'd and burnt—how many—  
 thirty-nine—  
 Call'd it rebellion—hang'd, poor friends,  
 as rebels  
 And burn'd alive as heretics! for your  
 Priest  
 Labels—to take the king along with him—  
 All heresy, treason: but to call men trai-  
 tors  
 May make men traitors.

Rose of Lancaster,  
 Red in thy birth, redder with household  
 war,  
 Now reddest with the blood of holy men,  
 Redder to be, red rose of Lancaster—  
 If somewhere in the North, as Rumor sang  
 Fluttering the hawks of this crown-lusting  
 line—  
 By firth and loch thy silver sister grow,\*  
 That were my rose, there my allegiance  
 due.  
 Self-starved, they say—nay, murder'd:  
 doubtless dead.  
 So to this king I cleaved: my friend was  
 he.  
 Once my fast friend: I would have given  
 my life  
 To help his own from scathe, a thousand  
 lives  
 To save his soul. He might have come to  
 learn  
 Our Wiclif's learning: but the worldly  
 Priests  
 Who fear the king's hard common-sense  
 should find  
 What rotten piles uphold their mason-  
 work,  
 Urge him to foreign war. O had he will'd  
 I might have stricken a lusty stroke for  
 him.

\* Richard II.

But he would not; far liefer led my friend  
 Back to the pure and universal church,  
 But he would not: whether that heiness  
 flaw  
 In his throne's title make him feel so frail,  
 He leans on Antichrist; or that his mind,  
 So quick, so capable in soldieryship,  
 In matters of the faith, alas the while!  
 More worth than all the kingdoms of this  
 world,  
 Runs in the rut, a coward to the Priest.

Burnt—good Sir Roger Acton, my dear  
 friend!  
 Burnt too, my faithful preacher, Bever-  
 ley!  
 Lord give thou power to thy two wit-  
 nesses!  
 Lest the false faith make merry over  
 them!  
 Two—nay but thirty-nine have risen and  
 stand,  
 Dark with the smoke of human sacrifice,  
 Before thy light, and cry continually—  
 Cry—against whom?

Him, who should bear the sword  
 Of Justice—what! the kingly, kingly boy:  
 Who took the world so easily heretofore,  
 My boon companion, tavern-fellow—him  
 Who gibed and japed—in many a merry  
 tale  
 That shook our sides—at Pardoners, Sum-  
 moners,  
 Friars, absolution-sellers, monkeries  
 And nunneries, when the wild hour and  
 the wine  
 Had set the wits aflame.

Harry of Monmouth  
 Or Amurath of the East?

Better to sink  
 Thy fleurs-de-lys in slime again, and fling  
 Thy royalty back into the riotous fits  
 Of wine and harlotry—thy shame, and  
 mine,  
 Thy comrade—than to persecute the Lord,  
 And play the Saul that never will be Paul.

Burnt, burnt! and while this mitred  
 Arundel  
 Dooms our unlicensed preacher to the  
 flame,  
 The mitre-sanction'd harlot draws his  
 clerks  
 Into the suburb—their hard celibacy,  
 Sworn to be veriest ice of pureness, molten  
 Into adulterous living, or such crimes  
 As holy Paul—a shame to speak of them—  
 Among the heathen—

Sanctuary granted  
 To bandit, thief, assassin—yea to him  
 Who hacks his mother's throat—denied to  
 him,  
 Who finds the Saviour in his mother's  
 tongue,  
 The Gospel, the Priest's pearl, flung down  
 to swine—  
 The swine, lay-men, lay-women, who will  
 come,  
 God willing, to outlearn the filthy friar.

Ah rather, Lord, than that thy Gospel,  
meant  
To course and range thro' all the world,  
should be  
Tether'd to these dead pillars of the  
Church—  
Rather than so, if thou wilt have it so,  
Burst vein, snap sinew, and crack heart,  
and life  
Pass in the fire of Babylon! but how long,  
O Lord, how long!

My friend should meet me here.  
Here is the corpse, the fountain and—a  
Cross!  
To thee, dead wood, I bow not head nor  
knees.  
Rather to thee, green boscage. Spark of  
God,  
Black holly, and white-flower'd wayfaring-  
tree!  
Rather to thee, thou living water, drawn  
By this good Wiclif mountain down from  
heaven,  
And speaking clearly in thy native  
tongue—  
No Latin—He that thirsteth, come and  
drink!

Eh! how I anger'd Arundel asking me  
To worship Holy Cross! I spread mine  
arms,  
God's work, I said, a cross of flesh and  
blood  
And holier. That was heresy. (My good  
friend  
By this time should be with me.) "Im-  
ages?"  
"Bury them as God's truer images  
Are daily buried." "Heresy.—Penance?"  
"Fast,  
Hairshirt and scourge—nay, let a man  
repent,  
Do penance in his heart, God hears him."  
"Heresy—  
Not shaven, not saved?" "What profits  
an ill Priest  
Between me and my God? I would not  
spurn  
Good counsel of good friends, but shrive  
myself,  
No, not to an Apostle." "Heresy."  
(My friend is long in coming.) "Pilgrim-  
ages?"  
"Drink, bagpipes, revelling, devil's-danc-  
es, vice.  
The poor man's money gone to fat the  
friar.  
Who reads of begging saints in Scrip-  
ture?"—"Heresy"—  
(Hath he been here—not found me—gone  
again?  
Have I misleamt our place of meeting?)  
"Bread—  
Bread left after the blessing?" how they  
stared,  
That was their main test-question—glared  
at me!  
"He veil'd Himself in flesh, and now He  
veils

His flesh in bread, body and bread  
together."  
Then rose the howl of all the cassock'd  
wolves,  
"No bread, no bread. God's body!"  
Archbishop, Bishop,  
Priors, Canons, Friars, bell-ringers, Par-  
ish-clerks—  
"No bread, no bread!"—"Authority of  
the Church,  
Power of the keys!"—Then I, God help  
me, I  
So mock'd, so spurn'd, so baited two  
whole days—  
I lost myself and fell from evenness,  
And rail'd at all the Popes, that ever  
since  
Sylvester shed the venom of world-  
wealth  
Into the church, had only prov'n them-  
selves  
Poisoners, murderers. Well—God pardon  
all—  
Me, them, and all the world—yea, that  
proud Priest,  
That mock-meek mouth of utter Anti-  
christ,  
That traitor to King Richard and the  
truth,  
Who rose and doom'd me to the fire.  
Amen!  
Nay, I can burn, so that the Lord of life  
Be by me in my death.  
Those three! the fourth  
Was like the son of God. Not burnt  
were they.  
On them the smell of burning had not  
past.  
That was a miracle to convert the king.  
These Phari-ees, this Caiaphas-Arundel  
What miracle could turn? He here  
again,  
He thwarting their traditions of Himself,  
He would be found a heretic to Himself,  
And doom'd to burn alive.

So, caught, I burn.  
Burn? heathen men have borne as much  
as this,  
For freedom, or the sake of those they  
loved,  
Or some less cause, some cause far less  
than mine;  
For every other cause is less than mine.  
The moth will singe her wings, and  
sing'd return,  
Her love of light quenching her fear of  
pain—  
How now, my soul, we do not heed the  
fire?  
Faint-hearted? tut!—faint-stomach'd!  
faint as I am,  
God willing, I will burn for Him.

Who comes?  
A thousand marks are set upon my head  
Friend?—foe perhaps—a tussle for it  
then!

Nay, but my friend. Thou art so well  
disguised,  
I knew thee not. Hast thou brought  
bread with thee?  
I have not broken bread for fifty hours.  
None? I am damn'd already by the  
Priest  
For holding there was bread where bread  
was none—

No bread. My friends await me yonder.  
Yes.  
Lead on then. *Up* the mountain? Is it  
far?  
Not far. Climb first and reach me down  
thy hand.  
I am not like to die for lack of bread,  
For I must live to testify by fire.\*

\* He was burnt on Christmas Day, 1417.

## COLUMBUS.

CHAINS, my good lord: in your raised  
brows I read  
Some wonder at our chamber ornaments.  
We brought this iron from our isles of  
gold.

Does the king know you deign to visit  
him  
Whom once he rose from off his throne to  
greet  
Before his people, like his brother king?  
I saw your face that morning in the  
crowd.

At Barcelona—tho' you were not then  
So bearded. Yes. The city deck'd herself  
To meet me, roar'd my name; the king,  
the queen  
Bade me be seated, speak, and tell them all  
The story of my voyage, and while I spoke  
The crowd's roar fell as at the "Peace, be  
still!"  
And when I ceased to speak, the king, the  
queen,  
Sank from their thrones, and melted into  
tears,  
And knelt, and lifted hand and heart and  
voice  
In praise to God who led me thro' the  
waste.  
And then the great "Laudamus" rose to  
heaven.

Chains for the Admiral of the Ocean!  
chains  
For him who gave a new heaven, a new  
earth,  
As holy John had prophesied of me,  
Gave glory and more empire to the kings  
Of Spain than all their battles! chains  
for him  
Who push'd his prows into the setting sun,  
And made West East, and sail'd the  
Dragon's mouth,  
And came upon the Mountain of the  
World,  
And saw the rivers roll from Paradise!

Chains! we are Admirals of the Ocean,  
we,  
We and our sons forever. Ferdinand  
Nath sign'd it and our Holy Catholic  
queen—

Of the Ocean—of the Indies—Admirals  
we—  
Our title, which we never mean to yield,  
Our guerdon not alone for what we did,  
But our amends for all we might have  
done—  
The vast occasion of our stronger life—  
Eighteen long years of waste, seven in  
your Spain,  
Lost, showing courts and kings a truth  
the babe  
Will suck in with his milk hereafter—earth  
A sphere.

Were *you* at Salamanca? No.  
We fronted there the learning of all  
Spain,  
All their cosmogonies, their astronomies;  
Guess-work *they* guess'd it, but the golden  
guess  
Is morning-star to the full round of truth.  
No guess-work! I was certain of my goal:  
Some thought it heresy; that would not  
hold.  
King David call'd the heavens a hide, a  
tent  
Spread over earth, and so this earth was  
flat:  
Some cited old Lactantius: could it be  
That trees grew downward, rain fell  
upward, men  
Walk'd like the fly on ceilings? and be  
sides,  
The great Augustine wrote that none  
could breathe  
Within the zone of heat; so might there  
be  
Two Adams, two mankinds, and that was  
clean  
Against God's word: thus was I beaten  
back,  
And chiefly to my sorrow by the Church,  
And thought to turn my face from Spain,  
appeal  
Once more to France or England; but our  
Queen  
Recall'd me, for at last their Highnesses  
Were half-assured this earth might be a  
sphere.

All glory to the all-blessed Trinity,  
All glory to the mother of our Lord,  
And Holy Church, from whom I never  
swerved

Not even by one hair's-breadth of heresy,  
I have accomplish'd what I came to do.

Not yet—not all—last night a dream—I  
sail'd  
On my first voyage, harass'd by the frights  
Of my first crew, their curses and their  
groans.  
The great flame-banner borne by Ten-  
eriffe,  
The compass, like an old friend false at last  
In our most need, appall'd them, and the  
wind  
Still westward, and the weedy seas—at  
length  
The landbird, and the branch with berries  
on it,  
The carven staff—and last the light, the  
light  
On Guanahani! but I changed the name;  
San Salvador I call'd it; and the light  
Grew as I gazed, and brought out a broad  
sky  
Of dawning over—not those alien palms,  
The marvel of that fair new nature—not  
That Indian isle, but our most ancient  
East  
Moriah with Jerusalem; and I saw  
The glory of the Lord flash up, and beat  
Thro' all the homely town from jasper,  
sapphire,  
Chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius,  
Chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase,  
Jacinth, and amethyst—and those twelve  
gates,  
Pearl—and I woke, and thought—death—  
I shall die—  
I am written in the Lamb's own Book of  
Life  
To walk within the glory of the Lord  
Sunless and moonless, utter light—but  
no!  
The Lord had sent this bright, strange  
dream to me  
To mind me of the secret vow I made  
When Spain was waging war against the  
Moor—  
I strove myself with Spain against the  
Moor.  
There came two voices from the Sepul-  
chre,  
Two friars crying that if Spain should  
oust  
The Moslem from her limit, he, the fierce  
Soldan of Egypt, would break down and  
raze  
The blessed tomb of Christ; whereon I  
vow'd  
That, if our Princes harken'd to my  
prayer,  
Whatever wealth I brought from that new  
world  
Should, in this old, be consecrate to lead  
A new crusade against the Saracen,  
And free the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

Gold? I had brought your Princes gold  
enough  
If left alone! Being but a Genovese,

I am handled worse than had I been a  
Moor,  
And breach'd the belting wall of Cambalu,  
And given the Great Khan's palaces to  
the Moor,  
Or clutch'd the sacred crown of Prester  
John,  
And cast it to the Moor: but had I brought  
From Solomon's now-recover'd Ophir all  
The gold that Solomon's navies carried  
home,  
Would that have gilded me? Blue blood  
of Spain,  
Tho' quartering your own royal arms of  
Spain.  
I have not: blue blood and black blood of  
Spain.  
The noble and the convict of Castile,  
Howl'd me from Hispaniola; for you  
know  
The flies at home, that ever swarm about  
And cloud the highest heads, and murmur  
down  
Truth in the distance—these out-buzz'd  
me so  
That even our prudent king, our righteous  
queen—  
I pray'd them being so calumniated  
They would commission one of weight  
and worth  
To judge between my slander'd self and  
me—  
Fonseca my main enemy at their court,  
They send me out *his* tool, Bovadilla, one  
As ignorant and impolitic as a beast—  
Blockish irreverence, brainless greed—  
who sack'd  
My dwelling, seized upon my papers,  
loosed  
My captives, feed the rebels of the crown,  
Sold the crown-farms for all but nothing,  
gave  
All but free leave for all to work the  
mines,  
Drove me and my good brothers home in  
chains,  
And gathering ruthless gold—a single  
piece  
Weigh'd nigh four thousand Castellanos—  
so  
They tell me—weigh'd him down into the  
abysm—  
The hurricane of the latitude on him  
fell,  
The seas of our discovering over-roll  
Him and his gold; the frailer caravel,  
With what was mine, came happily to the  
shore.  
There was a glimmering of God's hand.

And God  
Hath more than glimmer'd on me. O my  
lord,  
I swear to you I heard his voice between  
The thunders in the black Veragua nights,  
"O soul of little faith, slow to believe!  
Havest thou not been about thee from thy  
birth?  
Given thee the keys of the great Ocean-  
sea?"

Set thee in light till time shall be no more?  
Is it I who have deceived thee or the world?  
Endure! thou hast done so well for men, that men  
Cry out against thee: was it otherwise  
With mine own Son?"

And more than once in days  
Of doubt and cloud and storm, when  
drowning hope  
Sank all but out of sight, I heard his voice,  
"Be not cast down. I lead thee by the  
hand,  
Fear not." And I shall hear his voice  
again—  
I know that he has led me all my life,  
I am not yet too old to work his will—  
His voice again.

Still for all that, my lord,  
I lying here bedridden and alone,  
Cast off, put by, scouted by court and  
king—  
The first discoverer starves—his followers,  
all  
Flower into fortune—our world's way—  
and I,  
Without a roof that I can call mine own.  
With scarce a coin to buy a meal withal,  
And seeing what a door for scoundrel  
scum  
I open'd to the West, thro' which the lust,  
Villany, violence, avarice, of your Spain  
Pour'd in on all those happy naked isles—  
Their kindly native princes slain or slaved,  
Their wives and children Spanish concubines,  
Their innocent hospitalities quench'd in  
blood,  
Some dead of hunger, some, beneath the  
scourge,  
Some over-labor'd, some by their own  
hands,—  
Yea, the dear mothers, crazing Nature,  
kill  
Their babies at the breast for hate of  
Spain—  
Ah, God, the harmless people whom we  
found  
In Hispaniola's island-Paradise!  
Who took us for the very Gods from  
Heaven,  
And we have sent them very fiends from  
Hell;  
And I myself, myself not blameless, I  
Could sometimes wish I had never led the  
way.

Only the ghost of our great Catholic  
Queen  
Smiles on me, saying, "Be thou comforted!  
This creedless people will be brought to  
Christ  
And own the holy governance of Rome."

But who could dream that we, who bore  
the Cross

Thither, were excommunicated there,  
For curbing crimes that scandalized the  
Cross,  
By him, the Catalanian Minorite,  
Rome's Vicar in our Indies? who believe  
These hard memorials of our truth to  
Spain  
Clung closer to us for a longer term  
Than any friend of ours at Court? and yet  
Pardon—too harsh, unjust. I am rack'd  
with pains.

You see that I have hung them by my  
bed,  
And I will have them buried in my grave.

Sir, in that flight of ages which are  
God's  
Own voice to justify the dead—perchance  
Spain once the most chivalric race on  
earth,  
Spain then the mightiest, wealthiest realm  
on earth,  
So made by me, may seek to unbury me,  
To lay me in some shrine of this old Spain,  
Or in that vaster Spain I leave to Spain.  
Then some one standing by my grave will  
say,  
"Behold the bones of Christopher Co-  
lön"—  
"Ay, but the chains, what do *they* mean,  
the chains?"—  
I sorrow for that kindly child of Spain.  
Who then will have to answer, "These  
same chains  
Bound these same bones back thro' the  
Atlantic sea,  
Which he unchain'd for all the world to  
come."

O Queen of Heaven who seest the souls  
in Hell  
And purgatory, I suffer all as much  
As they do. for the moment. Stay, my  
son  
Is here anon: my son will speak for me  
Ablier than I can in these spasms that  
grind  
Bone against bone. You will not. One  
last word.

You move about the Court, I pray you  
tell  
King Ferdinand who plays with me, that  
one,  
Whose life has been no play with him  
and his  
Hidalgos—shipwrecks, famines, fevers,  
fights,  
Mutinies, treacheries—wink'd at, and con-  
doned—  
That I am loyal to him till the death,  
And ready—tho' our Holy Catholic Queen,  
Who fain had pledged her jewels on my  
first voyage,  
Whose hope was mine to spread the Catho-  
lic faith,  
Who wept with me when I return'd in  
chains,

Who sits beside the blessed Virgin now,  
To whom I send my prayer by night and  
day—  
She is gone—but you will tell the King,  
that I,  
Rack'd as I am with gout, and wrench'd  
with pains  
Gain'd in the service of His Highness, yet  
Am ready to sail forth on one last voy-  
age,

And readier, if the King would hear, to  
lead  
One last crusade against the Saracen,  
And save the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

Going? I am old and slighted: you  
have dared  
Somewhat perhaps in coming? my poor  
thanks!  
I am but an alien and a Genovese.

## THE VOYAGE OF MAELDUNE.

(Founded on an Irish Legend. A.D. 700.)

## I.

I was the chief of the race—he had  
stricken my father dead—  
But I gather'd my fellows together, I  
swore I would strike off his head.  
Each of them look'd like a king, and was  
noble in birth as in worth,  
And each of them boasted he sprang from  
the oldest race upon earth.  
Each was as brave in the fight as the  
bravest hero of song,  
And each of them liefer had died than  
have done one another a wrong.  
He lived on an isle in the ocean—we sail'd  
on a Friday morn—  
He that had slain my father the day be-  
fore I was born.

## II.

And we came to the isle in the ocean, and  
there on the shore was he.  
But a sudden blast blew us out and away  
thro' a boundless sea.

## III.

And we came to the Silent Isle that we  
never had touch'd at before,  
Where a silent ocean always broke on a  
silent shore,  
And the brooks glitter'd on in the light  
without sound, and the long water-  
falls  
Pour'd in a thunderless plunge to the  
base of the mountain walls,  
And the poplar and cypress unshaken by  
storm flourish'd up beyond sight,  
And the pine shot aloft from the crag to an  
unbelievable height,  
And high in the heaven above there  
flicker'd a songless lark,  
And the cock couldn't crow, and the bull  
couldn't low, and the dog couldn't  
bark.  
And round it we went, and thro' it, but  
never a murmur, a breath—  
It was all of it fair as life, it was all of it  
quiet as death,

And we hated the beautiful Isle, for  
whenever we strove to speak  
Our voices were thinner and fainter than  
any flitter-mouse-shriek;  
And the men that were mighty of tongue  
and could raise such a battle-cry  
That a hundred who heard it would rush  
on a thousand lances and die—  
O they to be dumb'd by the charm!—so  
fluster'd with anger were they  
They almost fell on each other; but after  
we sail'd away.

## IV.

And we came to the Isle of Shouting, we  
landed, a score of wild birds  
Cried from the topmost summit with  
human voices and words;  
Once in an hour they cried, and whenever  
their voices peal'd  
The steer fell down at the plow and the  
harvest died from the field,  
And the men dropt dead in the valleys and  
half of the cattle went lame,  
And the roof sank in on the hearth, and  
the dwelling broke into flame;  
And the shouting of these wild birds ran  
into the hearts of my crew,  
Till they shouted along with the shouting  
and seized one another and slew;  
But I drew them the one from the other;  
I saw that we could not stay,  
And we left the dead to the birds and we  
sail'd with our wounded away.

## V.

And we came to the Isle of Flowers:  
their breath met us out on the seas,  
For the Spring and the middle Summer  
sat each on the lap of the breeze;  
And the red passion-flower to the cliffs,  
and the dark blue clematis, clung,  
And starr'd with a myriad blossom the  
long convolvulus hung;  
And the topmost spire of the mountain  
was lilies in lieu of snow,  
And the lilies like glaciers winded down,  
running out below

Thro' the fire of the tulip and poppy, the  
 blaze of gorse, and the blush  
 Of millions of roses that sprang without  
 leaf or a thorn from the bush;  
 And the whole isle-side flashing down  
 from the peak without ever a tree  
 Swept like a torrent of gems from the sky  
 to the blue of the sea;  
 And we roll'd upon capes of crocus and  
 vaunted our kith and our kin,  
 And we wallow'd in beds of lilies, and  
 chanted the triumph of Finn,  
 Till each like a golden image was pollen'd  
 from head to feet  
 And each was as dry as a cricket, with  
 thirst in the middle-day heat.  
 Blossom and blossom, and promise of  
 blossom, but never a fruit!  
 And we hated the Flowering Isle, as we  
 hated the isle that was mute,  
 And we tore up the flowers by the million  
 and flung them in bight and bay,  
 And we left but a naked rock, and in  
 anger we sail'd away.

## VI.

And we came to the Isle of Fruits: all  
 round from the cliffs and the capes,  
 Purple or amber, dangled a hundred  
 fathom of grapes,  
 And the warm melon lay like a little sun  
 on the tawny sand,  
 And the fig ran up from the beach and  
 rioted over the land,  
 And the mountain arose like a jewell'd  
 throne thro' the fragrant air,  
 Glowing with all-color'd plums and with  
 golden masses of pear,  
 And the crimson and scarlet of berries  
 that flamed upon bine and vine,  
 But in every berry and fruit was the  
 poisonous pleasure of wine;  
 And the peak of the mountain was apples,  
 the hugest that ever were seen,  
 And they prest, as they grew, on each  
 other, with hardly a leaflet between,  
 And all of them redder than rosiest health  
 or than utterest shame,  
 And setting, when Even descended, the  
 very sunset aflame;  
 And we stay'd three days, and we gorged  
 and we madden'd, till every one drew  
 His sword on his fellow to slay him, and  
 ever they struck and they slew;  
 And myself, I had eaten but sparingly, and  
 fought till I sunder'd the fray,  
 Then I bade them remember my father's  
 death, and we sail'd away.

## VII.

And we came to the Isle of Fire: we were  
 lured by the light from afar,  
 For the peak sent up one league of fire to  
 the Northern Star;  
 Lured by the glare and the blare, but  
 scarcely could stand upright,  
 For the whole isle shudder'd and shook  
 like a man in a mortal affright;

We were giddy besides with the fruits we  
 had gorged, and so crazed that at last  
 There were some leap'd into the fire; and  
 away we sail'd, and we past  
 Over that undersea isle, where the vater  
 is clearer than air:  
 Down we look'd: what a garden! O bliss,  
 what a Paradise there!  
 Towers of a happier time, low down in a  
 rainbow deep  
 Silent palaces, quiet fields of eternal sleep!  
 And three of the gentlest and best of my  
 people, whate'er I could say,  
 Plunged head down in the sea, and the  
 Paradise trembled away.

## VIII.

And we came to the Bounteous Isle, where  
 the heavens lean low on the land,  
 And ever at dawn from the cloud glitter'd  
 o'er us a sunbright hand,  
 Then it open'd and dropt at the side of  
 each man, as he rose from his rest,  
 Bread enough for his need till the labor-  
 less day dipt under the West;  
 And we wander'd about it and thro' it.  
 O never was time so good!  
 And we sang of the triumphs of Finn, and  
 the boast of our ancient blood,  
 And we gazed at the wandering wave as  
 we sat by the gurgle of springs,  
 And we chanted the songs of the Bards  
 and the glories of fairy kings;  
 But at length we began to be weary, to  
 sigh, and to stretch and yawn,  
 Till we hated the Bounteous Isle and the  
 sunbright hand of the dawn,  
 For there was not an enemy near, but the  
 whole green Isle was our own,  
 And we took to playing at ball, and we  
 took to throwing the stone,  
 And we took to playing at battle, but that  
 was a perilous play,  
 For the passion of battle was in us, we  
 slew and we sail'd away.

## IX.

And we came to the Isle of Witches and  
 heard their musical cry—  
 "Come to us, O come, come" in the  
 stormy red of a sky  
 Dashing the fires and the shadows of  
 dawn on the beautiful hapes,  
 For a wild witch naked as heaven stood  
 on each of the kindest capes,  
 And a hundred ranged on the rock like  
 white sea-birds in a row,  
 And a hundred gambol'd and pranced on  
 the wrecks in the sand below,  
 And a hundred splash'd from the ledges,  
 and bosom'd the burst of the spray,  
 But I knew we should fall on each other,  
 and hastily sail'd away.

## X.

And we came in an evil time to the Isle  
 of the Double Towers:  
 One was of smooth-cut stone, one carved  
 all over with flowers:

But an earthquake always moved in the  
hollows under the dells,  
And they shock'd on each other and but-  
ted each other with clashing of bells,  
And the daws flew out of the Towers and  
jangled and wrangled in vain,  
And the clash and boom of the bells ran  
into the heart and the brain,  
Till the passion of battle was on us, and  
all took sides with the Towers,  
There were some for the clean-cut stone,  
there were more for the carven flow-  
ers,  
And the wrathful thunder of God peal'd  
over us all the day,  
For the one half slew the other, and after  
we sail'd away.

## XI.

And we came to the Isle of a Saint who  
had sail'd with St. Brendan of yore,  
He had lived ever since on the Isle and  
his winters were fifteen-score,  
And his voice was low as from other  
worlds, and his eyes were sweet,  
And his white hair sank to his heels and  
his white beard fell to his feet,

And he spake to me, "O Maeldune, let  
be this purpose of thine!  
Remember the words of the Lord when he  
told us 'Vengeance is mine!'  
His fathers have slain thy fathers in war  
or in single strife,  
Thy fathers have slain his fathers, each  
taken a life for a life,  
Thy father had slain his father, how long  
shall the murder last?  
Go back to the Isle of Finn and suffer the  
Past to be Past."  
And we kiss'd the fringe of his beard and  
we pray'd as we heard him pray,  
And the Holy man he assailed us, and  
sadly we sail'd away.

## XII.

And we came to the Isle we were blown  
from, and there on the shore was he,  
The man that had slain my father. I  
saw him and let him be.  
O weary was I of the travel, the trou'le,  
the strife and the sin,  
When I landed again, with a tithe of my  
men, on the Isle of Finn.

## PREFATORY SONNET.

TO THE "NINETEENTH CENTURY."

THOSE that of late had fled to far and fast  
To touch all shores, now leaving to the skill  
Of others their old craft seaworthy still,  
Have charter'd this; where, mindful of  
the past,  
Our true co-mates regather round the  
mast:  
Of diverse tongue, but with a common will  
Here, in this roaring moon of daffodil  
And crocus, to put forth and brave the  
blast;

For some, descending from the sacred  
peak  
Of hoar high-templed Faith, have leagued  
again  
Their lot with ours to rove the world  
about;  
And some are wilder comrades, sworn to  
seek  
If any golden harbor be for men  
In seas of Death and sunless gulfs of  
Doubt.

## TO THE REV. W. H. BROOKFIELD.

BROOKS, for they call'd you so that knew  
you best,  
Old Brooks, who loved so well to mouth  
my rhymes,  
How oft we two have heard St. Mary's  
chimes!  
How oft the Cantab supper, host and  
guest,  
Would echo helpless laughter to your jest!  
How oft with him we paced that walk of  
limes,

Him, the lost light of those dawn-golden  
times,  
Who loved you well! Now both are gone  
to rest,  
You man of humorous melancholy mark,  
Dead of some inward agony—is it so?  
Our kindlier, trustier Jaques, past away!  
I cannot laud this life, it looks so dark:  
Σκιάς ὄψαμ—dream of a shadow, go—  
God bless you. I shall join you in  
day.

## MONTENEGRO.

<p>THEY rose to where their sovran eaglesails,          They kept their faith, their freedom, on          the height,          Chaste, frugal, savage, arm'd by day and          night          Against the Turk; whose inroad nowhere          scales          Their headlong passes, but his footstep          fails,          And red with blood the Crescent reels          from fight          Before their dauntless hundreds, in prone          fight</p>	<p>By thousands down the crags and thro          the vales.          O smallest among peoples! rough rock          throne          Of Freedom! warriors beating back the          swarin          Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years,          Great Tsernogora! never since thine          own          Black ridges drew the cloud and brake the          storm          Has breathed a race of mightier moun-          taineers.</p>
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## TO VICTOR HUGO.

<p>VICTOR in Drama, Victor in Romance,          Cloud-weaver of phantasmal hopes and          fears,          French of the French, and Lord of human          tears;          Child-lover; Bard whose fame-lit laurels          glance          Darkening the wreaths of all that would          advance,          Beyond our strait, their claim to be thy          peers;          Weird Titan by thy winter weight of years</p>	<p>As yet unbroken, Stormy voice of          France!          Who dost not love our England—so they          say;          I know not—England, France, all man to          be          Will make one people ere man's race          be run:          And I, desiring that diviner day,          Yield thee full thanks for thy full cour-          tesy          To younger England in the boy my son.</p>
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## THE CITY CHILD.

<p>DAINTY little maiden, whither would you          wander?          Whither from this pretty home, the          home where mother dwells?          "Far and far away," said the dainty little          maiden,          "All among the gardens, auriculas,          anemones,          Roses and lilies and Canterbury-bells."</p>	<p>Dainty little maiden, whither would you          wander?          Whither from this pretty house, this          city-house of ours?          "Far and far away," said the dainty little          maiden,          "All among the meadows, the clover and          the clematis,          Daisies and kingcups and honeysuckle          flowers."</p>
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## MINNIE AND WINNIE.

<p>MINNIE and Winnie          Slept in a shell.          Sleep, little ladies!          And they slept well.</p> <p>Pink was the shell within,          Silver without;          Sounds of the great sea          Wander'd about.</p>	<p>Sleep, little ladies!          Wake not soon!          Echo on echo          Dies to the moon.</p> <p>Two bright stars          Peep'd into the shell.          "What are they dreaming of          Who can tell?"</p>
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Started a green linner  
 Out of the croft;  
 Wake, little ladies,  
 The sun is aloft!

## BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH.

Constantinus, King of the Scots, after having sworn allegiance to Athelstan, allied himself with the Danes of Ireland under Anlaf, and invading England, was defeated by Athelstan and his brother Edmund with great slaughter at Brunanburh in the year 937

## I.

\* ATHELSTAN King,  
Lord among Earls,  
Bracelet bestower and  
Baron of Barons,  
He with his brother,  
Edmund Atheling,  
Gaining a lifelong  
Glory in battle,  
Slew with the sword-edge  
There by Brunanburh,  
Broke the shield-wall,  
Hew'd the linden-wood, †  
Hack'd the battle-shield,

Sons of Edward with hammer'd brands.

## II.

Theirs was a greatness  
Got from their Grandsires—  
Theirs that so often in  
Strife with their enemies  
Struck for their hoards and their hearths  
and their homes.

## III.

Bow'd the spoiler,  
Bent the Scotsman,  
Fell the ship-crews  
Doom'd to the death.  
All the field with blood of the fighters  
Flow'd, from when first the great  
Sun-star of morning-tide,  
Lamp of the Lord God  
Lord everlasting,  
Glow'd over earth till the glorious crea-  
ture  
Sunk to his setting.

## IV.

There lay many a man  
Marr'd by the javelin,  
Men of the Northland  
Shot over shield.  
There was the Scotsman  
Weary of war.

## V.

We the West-Saxons,  
Long as the daylight  
Lasted, in companies  
Troubled the track of the host that we  
hated,  
Grimly with swords that were sharp from  
the grindstone,  
Fiercely we hack'd at the flyers before us.

## VI.

Mighty the Mercian,  
Hard was his hand-play,

Sparing not any of  
Those that with Anlaf,  
Warriors over the  
Weltering waters  
Borne in the bark's-bosom,  
Drew to this island,  
Doom'd to the death.

## VII.

Five young kings put asleep by the  
sword-stroke,  
Seven strong Earls of the army of Anlaf  
Fell on the war-field, numberless num-  
bers,  
Shipmen and Scotsmen.

## VIII.

Then the Norse leader,  
Dire was his need of it,  
Few were his following,  
Fled to his war-ship:  
Fleeted his vessel to sea with the king  
in it,  
Saving his life on the fallow flood.

## IX.

Also the crafty one,  
Constantinus,  
Crept to his North again,  
Hoar-headed hero!

## X.

Slender reason had  
He to be proud of  
The welcome of war-knives—  
He that was reft of his  
Folk and his friends that had  
Fallen in conflict,  
Leaving his son too  
Lost in the carnage,  
Mangled to morsels,  
A youngster in war!

## XI.

Slender reason had  
He to be glad of  
The clash of the war-glaive—  
Traitor and trickster  
And spurner of treaties—  
He nor had Anlaf  
With armies so broken  
A reason for bragging  
That they had the better  
In perils of battle  
On places of slaughter—  
The struggle of standards,  
The rush of the javelins,  
The crash of the charges,\*  
The wielding of weapons—  
The play that they play'd with  
The children of Edward.

\* I have more or less availed myself of my son's  
prose translation of this poem in the *Contemporary  
Review* (November, 1876). † Shields of linden-wood.

\* Lit. "the gathering of men"

## XII.

Then with their nail'd prows  
 Parted the Norsemen, a  
 Blood-redden'd relic of  
 Javelins over  
 The jarring breaker, the deep-sea billow,  
 Shaping their way toward Dyefn\*  
 again,  
 Shamed in their souls.

## XIII.

Also the brethren,  
 King and Atheling,  
 Each in his glory,  
 Went to his own in his own Vest-Saxon-  
 land,  
 Glad of the war.

## XIV.

Many a carcass they left to be carrion,  
 Many a livid one, many a sallow-skin—

• Dublin.

Left for the white-tail'd eagle to tear it,  
 and  
 Left for the horny-nibb'd raven to rend  
 it, and  
 Gave to the garbaging war-hawk to  
 gorge it, and  
 That gray beast, the wolf of the world

## XV.

Never had huger  
 Slaughter of heroes  
 Slain by the sword-edge—  
 Such as old writers  
 Have writ of in histories—  
 Hapt in this isle, since  
 Up from the East hither  
 Saxon and Angle from  
 Over the broad billow  
 Broke into Britain with  
 Haughty war-workers who  
 Harried the Welshman, when  
 Earls that were lured by the  
 Hunger of glory gat  
 Hold of the land.

## ACHILLES OVER THE TRENCH.

ILIAD, xviii. 202.

So saying, light-foot Iris pass'd away.  
 Then rose Achilles dear to Zeus; and  
 round  
 The warrior's puissant shoulders Pallas  
 flung  
 Her fringed ægis, and around his head  
 The glorious goddess wreath'd a golden  
 cloud,  
 And from it lighted an all-shining flame.  
 As when 'a smoke from a city goes to  
 heaven  
 Far off from out an island girt by foes,  
 All day the men contend in grievous war  
 From their own city, but with set of sun  
 Their fires flame thickly, and aloft the  
 glare  
 Flies streaming, if perchance the neigh-  
 bors round  
 May see, and sail to help them in the war;  
 So from his head the splendor went to  
 heaven.  
 From wall to dike he stept, he stood, nor  
 join'd  
 The Achæans—honoring his wise mother's  
 word—  
 There standing, shouted, and Pallas far  
 away

Call'd; and a boundless panic shook the  
 foe.  
 For like the clear voice when a trumpet  
 shrills,  
 Blown by the fierce beleaguers of a  
 town,  
 So rang the clear voice of Æakidës;  
 And when the brazen cry of Æakidës  
 Was heard among the Trojans, all their  
 hearts  
 Were troubled, and the full-maned horses  
 whirl'd  
 The chariots backward, knowing griefs  
 at hand;  
 And sheer-astounded were the charioteers  
 To see the dread, unweariable fire  
 That always o'er the great Peleion's head  
 Burn'd, for the bright-eyed goddess made  
 it burn.  
 Thrice from the dike he sent his mighty  
 shout,  
 Thrice backward reel'd the Trojans and  
 allies;  
 And there and then twelve of their  
 noblest died  
 Among their spears and chariots.

## TO THE PRINCESS FREDERICA ON HER MARRIAGE.

O YOU that were eyes and light to the  
 King till he past away  
 From the darkness of life—

He saw not his daughter—he blest her;  
 the blind King sees you to-day,  
 He blesses the wife.

# THE CHARGE OF THE HEAVY BRIGADE.\*

## I.

THE charge of the gallant Three Hundred, the Heavy Brigade  
Down the hill, down the hill, thousands of Russians,  
Thousands of horsemen drew to the valley—and stayed.  
For Scarlett and Scarlett's Three Hundred were riding by  
When the points of the Russian lances broke in on the sky;  
And he called "Left wheel into line!" and they wheeled and obeyed.  
Then he looked at the host that had halted, he knew not why,  
And he turned half round, and he bade his trumpeter sound  
"To the charge!" and he rode on ahead, as he waved his blade  
To the gallant Three Hundred, whose glory will never die.  
"Follow and up the hill!"  
Up the hill, up the hill followed the Heavy Brigade.

## II.

The trumpet, the gallop, the charge, and the might of the fight!  
Down the hill, slowly, thousands of Russians  
Drew to the valley, and halted at last on the height  
With a wing pushed out to the left, and a wing to the right.  
But Scarlett was far on ahead, and he dashed up alone  
Through the great gray slope of men;  
And he whirled his sabre, he held his own  
Like an Englishman there and then.  
And the three that were nearest him followed with force,  
Wedged themselves in between horse and horse,  
Fought for their lives in the narrow gap they had made,  
Four amid thousands; and up the hill, up the hill  
Galloped the gallant Three Hundred, the Heavy Brigade.

## III.

Fell, like a cannon-shot,  
Burst, like a thunderbolt,  
Crashed, like a hurricane.

Broke through the mass from below,  
Drove through the midst of the foe,  
Plunged up and down, to and fro,  
Rode flashing blow upon blow.  
Brave Inniskillings and Greys,  
Whirling their sabres in circles of light.  
And some of us all in amaze,  
Who were held for a while from the fight  
And were only standing at gaze,  
When the dark-muffled Russian crowd  
Folded its wings from the left and the right,  
And rolled them around like a cloud—  
Oh! mad for the charge and the battle were we  
When our own good red coats sank from sight,  
Like drops of blood in a dark gray sea;  
And we turned to each other, muttering all dismayed:  
"Lost are the gallant Three Hundred, the Heavy Brigade!"

## IV.

But they rode, like victors and lords,  
Through the forests of lances and swords;  
In the heart of the Russian hordes  
They rode, or they stood at bay;  
Struck with the sword-hand and slew;  
Down with the brid'e-hand drew  
The foe from the saddle and threw  
Under foot there in the fray;  
Ranged like a storm, or stood like a rock  
In the wave of a stormy day;  
Till suddenly shock upon shock  
Staggered the mass from without;  
For our men galloped up with a cheer and a shout,  
And the Russians surged, and wavered and reeled  
Up the hill, up the hill, up the hill, out of the field.  
Over the brow and away.

## V.

Glory to each and to all, and the charge that they made!  
Glory to all the Three Hundred, the Heavy Brigade!

\* The three hundred of the Heavy Brigade who made this famous charge [at Balaklava, Oct. 25, 1854] were the Scots Greys and the second squadron of the Inniskillings, the remainder of the Heavy Brigade subsequently dashing up to their support. The three were Elliott, Scarlett's aide-de-camp, who had been riding by his side, and the trumpeter and Shegog, the orderly, who had been close behind him.

## TO VIRGIL.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE MANTUANS FOR THE NINETEENTH CENTENARY OF  
VIRGIL'S DEATH.

## I.

**ROMAN** Virgil, thou that singest Ilion's  
lofty temples robed in fire,  
**Ilion** falling, Rome arising, wars, and filial  
faith, and Dido's pyre;

## II.

**Landscape-lover**, lord of language more  
than he that sang the Works and  
Days,  
**All** the chosen coin of fancy flashing out  
from many a golden phrase;

## III.

**Thou** that singest wheat and woodland,  
tilth and vineyard, hive and horse  
and herd;  
**All** the charm of all the Muses often flow-  
ering in a lonely word;

## IV.

**Poet** of the happy Tityrus piping under-  
neath his beechen bowers;  
**Poet** of the poet-satyr whom the laughing  
shepherd bound with flowers;

## V.

**Chanter** of the Pollio, glorying in the  
blissful years again to be,  
**Summers** of the snakeless meadow, unla-  
borious earth and oarless sea:

## VI.

Thou that seest Universal Nature moved  
by Universal Mind;  
Thou majestic in thy sadness at the  
doubtful doom of human kind;

## VII.

Light among the vanish'd ages; star that  
gildest yet this phantom shore;  
Golden branch amid the shadows, kings  
and realms that pass to rise no more;

## VIII.

Now thy Forum roars no longer; fallen  
every purple Caesar's dome—  
Tho' thine ocean-roll of rhythm sound  
forever of Imperial Rome—

## IX.

Now the Rome of slaves hath perish'd, and  
the Rome of freemen holds her  
place;  
**I**, from out the Northern Island sunder'd  
once from all the human race

## X.

I salute thee, Mantovano, I that love,  
thee since my day began,  
Wielder of the stateliest measure ever  
moulded by the lips of man.



